AGRI-NEWS

August 6, 1990

For immediate release

CANADIANA

AUG 21 1990

This Week

Long-term benefits seen from CIAGA conference.....1

Protecting hay from weather damage.....4

Privatization of Alberta Terminals Limited enters final phase.....6

Solar, wind power demonstrations in Lethbridge.....7

Removing bee and wasp nests.....8

Provincial 4-H heifer show popular with members.....10

High participation at 4-H provincial dairy show.....13

4-H sheep clubs featured at showcase.....15

Briefs.....17

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

https://archive.org/details/agrinews00albe_42

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

Long-term benefits seen from CIAGA conference

Consistently good quality cattle impressed delegates who came to Alberta for an international cattle breeders convention.

For the first time in nearly 20 years, representatives of the Confederacion Interamericana de Ganaderos (CIAGA) met in Canada. Its members hail from North, Central and South America. Over 200 CIAGA members from 13 countries gathered in Calgary recently for the 26th annual conference.

Billed as an opportunity to showcase the province's livestock industry, the conference exceeded expectations of the hosting Alberta Canada All Breeds Association (ACABA), say two Alberta Agriculture trade directors. International visitors were extremely impressed with the consistent high quality of Alberta livestock, says Doug Bienert, especially what they saw at the Calgary International Stock Show, the Red Deer Westerner and at a variety of breeders and industry locations in southern and central Alberta.

"The key to marketing Alberta cattle," Bienert says,"is getting the people here to see the product. It's pretty hard for a first time visitor to not be impressed, and a vast majority of the foreign breeders who came were making their first trip to Canada or Western Canada."

Bienert's colleague, Elton Dunk, adds while on impromptu tours during the conference and during the post-conference tour, CIAGA visitors were often impressed before they saw a breeder's cattle. "First class operations and general agricultural practices found on family farms, not large corporations made a big impression," says Dunk.

While unable to estimate exactly how many sales were generated from conference activities, both men point out the immediate sales aren't as important as the solid contacts made when CIAGA delegates met with local breeders at the conference and during tours before and after the conference.

(Cont'd)

"Participation from the local breeders was a real key to the success of the conference, both from making it a worthwhile and enjoyable experience for the international visitors, and also for marketing their Alberta product," says Bienert.

"The effects of the conference will be long-term and that means repeat customers from the good will and contacts made," adds Dunk.

Part of the conference success may be due to a first time event at the conference, a trade show. Representatives from some of the 23 cattle breed associations and the Alberta Sheep Breeders' Association, all ACABA members, had booths set-up during the conference.

Flurries of sign language sometimes were the mode of communication, but the enthusiasm of the various breed organizations and their participation added an extra marketing dimension to the conference. Tours were arranged there and delegates could pick up general information about individual breeds of beef and dairy cattle as well as sheep. Showing Suffolk sheep to a group of Columbians and a Limousin bull tour in August for interested Mexicans are two examples of the generated activity.

The breeds' showcase also sparked interested in cross breeding, says Bienert. "The wide range of animals and genetics here, gave the delegates ideas about herd improvement through cross breeding."

Simultaneous English-Spanish translation service was offered at the conference sessions that included expert speakers from throughout the Americas.

The conference also drew high profile government representatives which made an impact on the international delegates says Bienert. Federal agriculture minister Don Mazankowski was on hand to officially open the conference and Ernie Isley, Alberta's agriculture minister, took part in the majority of conference sessions and activities.

Isley, who summed up the conference as a huge success, says "Invaluable contacts were made by the Alberta livestock industry that will undoubtably stimulate trade activities long into the future."

(Cont'd)

Long-term benefits seen from CIAGA conference (cont'd)

The official post conference tour went to Canadiana Genetics, the Red Deer Westerner Exhibition, Olds College, Edmonton Northlands and Angus, Charolais, Hereford and Simmental breeders in central Alberta.

Alberta is currently the only CIAGA member province. More than 20 countries in the Americas are part of CIAGA. The organization has a broad mandate to improve the livestock industry and provide a vehicle to promote greater co-operation and trade between member countries.

30

Contact: Doug Bienert
427-4241

Elton Dunk
427-4241

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

Protecting hay from weather damage

Hay should be removed from the field and stacked as soon as possible to minimize damage from rainfall or flooding says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Moisture content at baling and bale size determine how soon hay can be stacked," says Myron Bjorge, forage crops supervisor with the fields crop branch in Lacombe.

Moisture content is best determined with an accurately calibrated hay moisture tester or with a microwave oven test. Instructions for the microwave oven test are found in Alberta Agriculture's Silage Manual (Agdex 120\52-2). For more information, contact any Alberta Agriculture district office.

With small square bales, a 20 per cent moisture content at baling is considered a safe level to minimize spoiling, he says. In very hot weather--over 30 degrees Celsius--the moisture content should be two per cent drier.

"Hay is often baled at higher moisture levels to get it up ahead of rain or to reduce leaf loss of legumes. Leaf losses are a concern when baling dry legume hay, since legume leaf losses are about twice as high as those for grasses.

"However, leaf losses related to moisture content don't become high until moisture contents are under 18 per cent. When baling at higher moisture contents, be aware your hay should cure or dry adequately, before it's stacked," he says.

Bjorge says if moderate spoilage--some visible molding, dustiness, some light brown coloring from heating and minimal shrinkage--is acceptable, hay can be baled at a 25 per cent moisture content. "Remember with moderate spoilage, disgestibility, animal intake and production are minimally effected," he says.

(Cont'd)

Hay in large round bales can be safely baled at about a 15 to 17 per cent moisture content. This depends on both the actual bale size and air temperature. "Large bales must be drier than small bales, since heat and moisture escapes more slowly due to the larger amount of forage in the bigger bale," he says. Moderate spoilage will occur if baling is done in a 17 to 20 per cent moisture content range, he adds. This range again, depends on the bale size and air temperature.

Hay can be safely stacked in sheds at a 13 to 14 per cent moisture content. "Some time for curing in the field allows bales to reach this level," he says.

Storage buildings or sheds provide the best protection from weather damage, he says. "Outside stacks provide reasonably good protection, provided they are well covered." Bjorge advises locating stacks on high ground where sun and wind can dry them following rain.

Bjorge notes the top bales of tarped small square bale stacks often spoil since moisture collects at the top. Pulling up the middle bales to form a peak or adding a single row of bales along the centre allows air to circulate under the tarp and rainfall to run off rather than pool.

A plastic sheet on the ground under the bottom layer also reduces spoilage. "The plastic shouldn't extend beyond the stack, because it will collect moisture," he says.

Large round bales should also be stacked in hay sheds if possible, says Bjorge. If not, outside stacks need to be located on high ground with good surface and internal drainage.

"Rounded sides of uncovered large bales shouldn't touch as spoilage occurs at the point of contact," he says. "Store them end-to-end with at least 18 inches between rows to minimize losses when not using a cover in outside storage." A covered pyramid stack is acceptable, but without a plastic cover results in excess spoilage at the point of contact between the bales, he adds.

30

Contact: Myron Bjorge
782-4641

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

Privatization of Alberta Terminals Limited enters final phase

Agriculture minister Ernie Isley has announced the Government of Alberta has entered into negotiations with Cargill Limited for the sale of Alberta Terminals Limited (ATL).

ATL is a grain handling company, wholly owned by the Province of Alberta, with inland terminal facilities at Lethbridge, Calgary, and Edmonton and a trackside loading facility at High Level.

On November 16, 1989, Isley announced the province would receive proposals for the purchase of ATL shares or assets. Since that time, a number of proposals have been received and evaluated. Nineteen firms indicated an interest in acquiring the company or its assets. Eight firms made specific proposals.

"The proposals were evaluated against a carefully chosen set of financial and public policy goals, including the degree to which the new private sector owner could contribute to improved transportation and handling efficiency and to more effective competition. Future commercial viability of the operation, as well as the financial return to the Alberta taxpayer, were also important considerations," says Isley.

While a number of other attractive proposals were submitted, Isley says Cargill's proposal was judged by an interdepartmental working group to best meet the goals established by the government. He notes, for example, Cargill's proposal offered the highest financial return to the Government of Alberta.

"I expect that negotiations with Cargill Limited will lead to an agreement for sale that will result in the Alberta government achieving the best balance between its public policy goals and a satisfactory realization of the Province's assets," says Isley.

The minister says negotiations with Cargill are now underway, and are expected to result in an agreement for sale by fall.

30

Contact: C.D. Radke
427-1957

Brad Klak
427-2137

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

Solar, wind power demonstrations in Lethbridge

Wind mills and solar pumps will be demonstrated by the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre (AFMRC) near Lethbridge on August 23.

The demonstrations will be held at the Lethbridge Wind Research Test Site, just east of the city limits. All the units are currently being evaluated by the AFMRC.

The afternoon's activities will include a short presentation on the history and future of the test site, as well as a walking tour of the site and the units on test, says Rick Atkins, the centre's manager.

Atkins says this year's demonstration day is a special one for the centre, because it's the host for the first time. The AFMRC assumed administration of the test site in April. Previously, Alberta Agriculture's land evaluation and reclamation branch was responsible for the site.

"Evaluation of wind mills, solar panels, pumps and aerators complements current evaluation underway at the centre," says Atkins. "Through our research and development capabilities, we'll be able to provide additional support for alternative energy sources."

Alberta Agriculture began a testing and demonstration program of wind turbines for agricultural water pumping at the Lethbridge site in 1982. In 1987 the project was expanded to include photovoltaic (solar) pumping systems. Funding for the site is provided by Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Energy and Energy, Mines and Resources Canada.

Wind energy has been used since the 1850s to pump agricultural water in North America. Peak usage was around the turn of the century. Rural electrification dramatically decreased the demand for wind power, but increasing energy costs in the 1970s sparked interest in alternate energy sources.

30

Contact: Rick Atkins
329-1212

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

Removing bee and wasp nests

Usually considered beneficial insects, bees and wasps can sometimes be a hazard when their nests are in and around occupied buildings says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

The list of common types is long: honey, bumble, leafcutter, alkali and carpenter bees; yellow jacket and mud-dauber wasps; and, bald-faced hornets. Doug Colter, chief apiculture inspector, says there are just about as many ways to remove the stinging insects. All the methods have at least one thing in common.

"It's very important whatever method you use, that you do it in the evening. That's when all the bees or wasps are in the nest. During the day many will be away and you won't achieve a complete kill. As well, the danger of being stung is greater in the daylight," Colter says.

One way to remove a nest is with a vacuum cleaner. This method is especially good for nests near a door or window sill and if there is only one nest entrance. Place a few moth balls--paradicholorobenzene or naptha--in the vacuum bag and hold the end of the vacuum hose at the nest entrance. "A few hard knocks on the wall will bring out its occupants, then they're sucked into the vacuum and overcome by fumes. Doing this over several evenings will reduce or eliminate the bee or wasp population," he says.

Nests in debris on the ground or under logs or rocks can be destroyed quickly and effectively by pouring boiling water over them after dark, he says.

Insecticides can also be used. Insecticides with pyrethrin, resmethrin or propoxur are readily available, he says. Direct a stream of the insecticide into the nest entrance to ensure a complete saturation and kill.

(Cont'd)

Removing bee and wasp nests (cont'd)

A spray bomb, especially for bees and wasps, is also available. It throws a thin stream of insecticide eight to 10 feet, making it easier to treat nests that aren't readily accessible.

Colter warns insecticides as a concentrate--solution or dust applied--or an aerosol spray are toxic and should be used with extreme care. "Follow instructions on the label, avoid danger of food contamination and do not use them inside a dwelling," he says. He also advises wearing protective clothing as required, to wash body and clothes after handling, triple rinse the sprayer unit and store extra materials out of reach and in a secure place.

"After treatment with an insecticide, remove the nest and destroy it. If you can't remove it easily, you should fill in any entrance or exit holes as soon as possible after any treatment," Colter says.

Because honey bees, bumble bees, wasps and hornets are social insects, they often build large nests over the summer months. "The brood within their nests may continue to emerge after the adults have been removed. This may require a second or third treatment to completely destroy the nest," he says.

The only other way to rid yourself of pest bees and wasps is to wait for cold weather, he says. Autumn frosts kill off the worker populations of wasp and most bee nests. Honey bees can survive the winter clustered in the protection of their nest. To destroy them in the winter, their nesting place must be exposed to the cold.

Colter also notes honey salvaged from honey bee nests destroyed by pesticides isn't fit for consumption. The combs should be burned or buried immediately.

30

Contact: Doug Colter
837-2211

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

Provincial 4-H heifer show popular with members

Alberta 4-H heifer club members show a lot of enthusiasm for the annual provincial heifer show in Bashaw says Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H specialist.

"We had over 140 members take part in the show again this year," says Henry Wiegman.

The 14th annual show included grooming, judging, showmanship and conformation classes for junior, intermediate and senior members. "Another important part of the show is the freshman classes, for members in all the age groups who are making their first appearance at the show. The freshman classes are judged on both the animal's conformation and the member's showmanship," says Wiegman.

All clubs are eligible for a herdsmanship award. The St. Paul Multi Club took home the top honors for the third consecutive year.

St. Paul member Denis Kotowich also lugged home a number of awards. His three-year old Simmental cross heifer was the supreme champion crossbred at the show and his yearling was judged the reserve supreme champion. Teamed with club member Kyla Makowecki, the duo won overall team judging honors, first place in intermediate judging and were second in showring judging.

Craig Penosky's Black Angus yearling was the supreme champion purebred heifer. The reserve supreme champion purebred was a yearling Limousin shown by Shane Washerol from the Mannville Multi Club. Penosky, 12, a junior member from Botha, also took home top junior showmanship honors.

Team grooming classes were the first competition at the show. Junior honors went to Kimberly and Jennifer Penosky, Botha. Intermediate winners were Leigha and Shelley Rattray, Airdrie and senior winners were Russell and Jailene Spence, Colinton.

Top individual judging honors went to Tova Place of the Nanton Beef Club. Place was also top senior judge. First place intermediate judge Geoff Hoar, Knee Hill Valley Club, was second overall.

(Cont'd)

A Black Angus yearling shown by Craig Penosky, of the Botha Club, was the supreme champion at the 14th annual provincial heifer show in Bashaw.

Junior team judging was won by Greg Hoar and Aaron Lutz of the Knee Hill Valley Club. Senior honors went to Egan and Jay Brockhoff of the Edberg Beef Club. Showring judging honors were captured by Kirk Wildman, of Sangudo Beef, and Rusty Cox, of Armena Beef. Wildman was second to Debbie Dick, of Sunniebend Beef, for judging reasons. Dick also received top honors in senior showmanship.

Shauna Adams of Hastings Coulee was the intermediate showmanship winner.

The supreme champion in the junior freshman class was Shanna Peters of the Delburne Beef Club with a Simmental yearling. The reserve champion was Ron Lafrance of the St. Paul Multi Club with a Limousin cross yearling.

Senior freshman honors went to Bobbi-Gayle Hosegood of the West Didsbury Club with a yearling Simmental. Annie Hopwood was the reserve senior freshman winner. The Peers Beef Club member showed a two year old Hereford.

(Cont'd)

Provincial 4-H heifer show popular with members (cont'd)

The conformation judge was Andy Brown, of Lethbridge, with Brad Fournier, of Millet, the junior conformation judge.

Grooming was judged by Dea Young, of Spruce Grove, and Dave Sibbald, of Calgary. They were joined by Dave Durie, Jr., of Vegreville, to judge showmanship. Durie and Jay Wildman, of Sangudo, were the freshman class judges. Along with Jim Hansen, of Bluffton, the group worked as judges for the judging competitions.

The show is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Treasury Branches, the Bashaw Agricultural Society, the Bag Lady and the Stettler Auction Market.

For complete show results, contact Wiegman at the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 427-2541.

30

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

High participation at 4-H provincial dairy show

All but two of the 13 dairy clubs across the province were represented by 72 4-H members at the 44th annual provincial 4-H dairy show in Red Deer.

Lexi Wright, a senior member from a Crossfield-Didsbury-Carstairs area club called CDC, took home a number of individual honors. They included first in senior judging, high showring judging with Scott Lausen, high overall individual judge, high overall judging reasons, senior showmanship and champion showman. The CDC club won the team judging award.

Lexi Wright (centre) was a multiple winner at the recent provincial 4-H dairy. Above she receives the senior showmanship award from Terry Murray (right) from the Alberta Dairymen's Association and Dairy Princess Grace Scheetz (left).

Another multiple winner was Darren Hipken. The East Edmonton Club member won the supreme championship with his yearling Holstein. Hipken also claimed overall and top senior clipping honors.

Junior judge honors went to Lynsey Chalack of the Mountain View Club and the intermediate first place was won by Laura Jeffry of CDC.

(Cont'd)

High participation at 4-H provincial dairy show (cont'd)

Len Congdon, of Rollyview, was first in intermediate clipping and showmanship. Dereck Van Sickle, of the Mountain View Club, won junior showmanship.

Conformation class winners were: intermediate calf champion, Mark Van Zeggelaar, Green Acres; summer yearling, Tracy Crest, Sturgeon Valley; junior yearling, Corry Gross, Rollyview; calf, Linsey Chalack, Mountain View; and, winter yearling, Tylwa Lund, Twilite.

Twilite Dairy Club, of Cherhill, won the club herdsman award for the second consecutive year.

Norm Atkins was the senior conformation judge and Ella Wright the junior conformation judge. John Copithorne Jr. was the showmanship and clipping judge. Steven Land was the junior showmanship judge.

Among the show sponsors were Alberta Agriculture, the Westerner Exhibition, Western Breeders' Service, the Alberta Holstein Association, the Alberta Jersey Club, the Alberta Aryshire Breeders Club, the Alberta Dairymen's Association, the Alberta Milk Haulers Association, the Central Alberta Dairy Pool and the Central Alberta Holstein Club.

For complete show results, contact Henry Wiegman at Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch in Edmonton, at 427-2541.

30

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

4-H sheep clubs featured at showcase

Sixteen Alberta 4-H sheep club members had a busy two days in Red Deer during Sheep Showcase'90.

The members worked with 60 head of sheep in a variety of classes including trimming, judging, showmanship and conformation.

Tina Young of the Crowfoot Beef and Sheep Club exhibited both the supreme champion market and wool ewes at the show. Along the way she garnered top spot in the yearling ewe class with her Dorset and wool yearling ewe with her Ramboulette. Young also earned first place in the intermediate trimming class.

ALL EYES ON THE JUDGE IN A WOOL CLASS

Adam Verweire, also of the Crowfoot club, took reserve supreme honors with his Dorset ewe lamb. Verweire was also senior showmanship champion.

Reserve supreme honors for wool ewes went to Bobbi Jackson, a junior from the Rosebud Sheep Club. Jackson also won her age group showmanship class.

Freshman classes at the show are for first time exhibitors, and competitors are judged on their animal's conformation and their own showmanship. The junior winner was Laureen Hall of the Rosebud club and the senior winner was Tabitha Gourley, of the Foothills Club. Gourley also won the champion feeder lamb class with her Suffolk.

Judging winners were: Amber Builder, junior, Irricana; Angela Barrett, intermediate, Foothills; and, May Gourley, senior, Foothills. Both Barrett and Gourley were double winners at the show. Barrett took intermediate showmanship honors and Gourley won the mature ewe class.

(Cont'd)

4-H sheep clubs featured at showcase (cont'd)

Melissa Barrett, Foothills club, won the junior trimming competition and Rolanda Ostrom, of the same club, took top senior honors.

The club premier exhibitor award went to the Rosebud Club from the Didsbury area. Second place went to Irricana and third to the Okotoks area Foothills club.

Jim Kinniburgh was the conformation judge and Gordon Cadsand was the showmanship judge. Junior judges were Rolanda Ostrom (showmanship) and Carmen Smith (conformation).

Sheep Showcase was sponsored by the Northern Alberta Sheep Breeders, Gourley Farms, Ostrum Trucking, the Bag Lady, Lambco, Red Deer Lake Processors, the Alberta Sheep Breeders Association, Coopers Agropharm Inc., the Alberta Sheep and Wool Growers, the Western Exposition and Alberta Agriculture.

For complete show results, contact Henry Wiegman at Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch in Edmonton at 427-2541.

30

Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

August 6, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

ISLEY ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS TO MARKETING COUNCIL

Agriculture minister Ernie Isley has announced the appointments of three new members to the Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council. Frank Fallwell, Enid Schreiber and Harry Schudlo joined the council on July 19. Fallwell is a Calgary businessman and former head of the Alberta Food Processors Association. Schreiber is a cattle and grain producer and municipal councillor from Dapp. Schudlo is a grain and oilseed producer from Sexsmith. "The Alberta Agricultural Products Marketing Council will be very well served by the addition of Ms Schreiber, Mr. Fallwell and Mr. Schudlo as new members. Their many years of experience, their broad knowledge of agricultural issues and their shared dedication to progress in the agriculture and food industry make them excellent choices as members of the marketing council," says Isley. The council is the agency responsible for administration of the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act. It oversees the operation of marketing boards and commissions in the province and acts as a liaison between the Alberta government and federal agencies. For more information, contact Ken Smith, council general manager, in Edmonton at 427-2164 or Isley's executive assistant Brad Klak at 427-2137.

DAIRY CONGRESS PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON FORAGES

The fourth annual Alberta Dairy Congress billed itself as 'making hay while the sun shines' and put the focus on forages. This focus included a first time forage competition recognizing best legume hay, best grass\legume hay mixture and best silage. Samples were analyzed by Alberta Agriculture and judges also made a visual inspection. Legume hay class winners were: Adrian Goudreau, South Edmonton, first and Otoskwan Farms, Arthur and Ernie Lange, South Edmonton, second. Michael Berube, of Beaumont, won the grass\legume hay mix class with Richard Wagner, of Wetaskiwin, second. The silage and hay class was won by Ray

(Cont'd)

DAIRY CONGRESS PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON FORAGES (cont'd)

Heppern, of Ellerslie, with Francis Demilliano, of Calmar, second. Cash prizes ranged from $100 for first place to $25 for third. Competition sponsors included Prairie Seeds, Star Quality Sampler, Apple Auto Glass and Pickseed Canada. A display of forage grasses by the University of Alberta's plant science department was another new feature. Farm tours were also part of congress activities for the first time. Three area dairy operators were the tour stops. Educational seminars discussed climate, non-bloat alfalfa and legume seed inoculation. For more information, call the Congress office at 986-8108.

ACC HIRES NEW GENERAL MANAGER

Gary Sargent is the general manager of the Alberta Cattle Commission (ACC). Sargent brings over 20 years of management experience in the agricultural industry to his new position. Most recently, he was executive assistant to the chief executive officer of a major agricultural organization. "The ACC welcomes Sargent's extensive business management, public relations, agricultural policy development and marketing capabilities to our organizations," says George Schoepp, ACC chairman. Sargent began his new duties on July 30. He can be contacted in Calgary at 275-4400.

STAMPEDE HOLDS FIRST SUPREME CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION

Champion bulls and females in 15 beef breed were on display at the first parade of champions at the Calgary Stampede. Top honors and $5,000 awards in both categories went to 30-month old Charolais cattle. A panel of seven people, representing different breeds and sectors of the cattle industry, judged the best of best and the winner was determined from their collective scores. The winning bull was SVC Futurist 809X owned by a consortium of four Alberta breeders. Levi's Keepsake Pld 6X, owned by Levi's Cattle Service of Sedley, Saskatchewan, was the supreme champion female. At other Stampede activities, the steer classic

(Cont'd)

STAMPEDE HOLDS FIRST SUPREME CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION (cont'd)

champions auction generated over $27,000 in sales. More than $8,000 was raised during the sale--and resales--of steers and market lambs for the Shock Trauma Airt Rescue Society (STARS). For more information, contact Don Stewart, Stampede agriculture manager at 261-0162.

CROPS OF ALBERTA OPEN HOUSE AUG. 9 AND 10

A better understanding of the relationship between what a farmer produces and what ends up on a consumer's table is the goal of this year's Crops of Alberta open house. The display, located just south of Alberta Agriculture's headquarters (the J.G. O'Donaghue Building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton), includes 70 different cereal, oilseed and specialty crops. This year's annual open house will feature an individual crop use theme. The Crops of Alberta display is open throughout the summer to the public to tour on their own. Each plot is labeled with the crop type and its use. During the open house tours will be given at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. For more information, contact John Doyle at 427-7098.

UNINVITED GUESTS AT DINNER VIDEO

A 19-minute videotape featuring four true-life dramas of food-bourne illness is now available for loan from Alberta Agriculture's Film Library. "Uninvited Guests to Dinner" discusses safe food preparation, cooking, storage and serving. Write the Alberta Agriculture Film Library at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6 for lending information.

30

AGRI-NEWS

August 13, 1990

For immediate release

AUG 2 1 1990

This Week

Agriculture ambassador educational program announced.....1

Feedgrain supplies tight despite increased production.....3

Wheat prices forecasts down with favorable crop conditions.....4

World oilseed stock limits canola prices.....5

Low bloat alfalfa possible by mid-1990s.....6

25th anniversary celebrations highlight 1990 4-H conservation camp.....8

Soil conservation professor appointed.....9

Alberta Agriculture undergoes departmental reorganization.....11

Alberta Agriculture appointments.....12

Briefs.....14

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Agriculture ambassador educational program announced

Alberta Agriculture's Ag in the Classroom program has started an ambitious project to put an agricultural ambassador in every Alberta school in the next five years.

The new Agricultural Ambassador Program was announced at the inaugural Summer Agriculture Institute in Lethbridge. "Through the program, we're creating an infrastructure that will for the first time formally link every school in the province to the agricultural industry," says Betty Gabert, Ag in the Classroom co-ordinator.

A teacher agricultural ambassador, designated in every school, will be supported with training workshops, classroom materials and a major network of agricultural industry contacts, says Gabert. "Each school's agricultural ambassador will play a leadership role in having colleagues incorporate agriculture into their course material and also be a clearing house of information and materials other teachers can use in their classes."

Development of the ambassador program is a natural extension of the Summer Agriculture Institute program, says Gabert. The institute is an intensive 12-day, full-credit, fourth year university level course for teachers. Hands-on learning is combined with practical curriculum development. Practicing Alberta teachers at all grade levels and fourth year education students are eligible to attend the institute.

"People prepared to take leadership roles in their community and do professional development with their colleagues were qualities looked for in Institute applicants," says Gabert. "Institute graduates will hopefully be a first source of agricultural ambassadors."

Southern Alberta will be the first target area of the ambassador program, she says. Regions will be designated with the institute as it moves around the province each year. "Later this year there will be an official launch of the ambassador program in southern Alberta. More details about how the program will operate will be available then."

(Cont'd)

The Alberta Wheat Pool is already involved as a partner in the ambassador program. The Pool has committed $20,000 to the first year of the project, and will review ongoing sponsorship annually over the next five years. As well, it will be involved in developing the program, says Gabert.

"Having the involvement of a major agricultural organization enhances the community element of the ambassador program," she says. "Involving the community in learning is an important overall direction of education in Alberta."

30

Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2402

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Feedgrain supplies tight despite increased production

Slightly higher international feedgrain prices are coming this winter says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"World feedgrain consumption is projected to exceed production again in 1990-91. The tighter demand-supply balance will be reflected in higher prices. Cheaper wheat will be competitive and keep feedgrain prices from moving drastically higher," says Charlie Pearson in a quarterly feedgrain situation and outlook report.

International barley prices will range between $135 and $150 (Canadian dollars) this winter, he says. "Weather, demand and politics will all play a part in barley prices before and after the crop is harvested," he says. Prairie barley producers can expect a combined adjustment/final payment of $20 to $35 in addition to the current port position initial payment of $90 per tonne. Off-board barley prices at Prairie elevators will likely hold in the $75 to $95 per tonne range through the fall and winter, he says.

In local markets, Pearson gives a 50 per cent likelihood to prices between $90 and $105 in central and northern Alberta and between $105 and $120 in the south. These prices are similar to last year's, he adds.

Alberta feed oat prices are also forecast to remain around last winter's levels he says. He predicts a range between $65 and $80 per tonne. "High quality oats should hold to between a $10 to $20 per tonne premium over normal feed oats," he adds.

Rye prices will likely be in the $60 to $80 per tonne range, he says. "The only hope for rye prices at the upper end of the range is improvements in the feedgrain complex," he says.

30

Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Wheat price forecasts down with favorable crop conditions

Prospects of a record 1990-91 global wheat crop have pressured international prices lower in recent weeks says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Price declines are a reflection of generally good conditions for world wheat production. As well, continued use of export subsidies by the United States and the EC is a major factor in low prices, in spite of historically tight supplies," says Charlie Pearson in a quarterly feedgrain situation and outlook.

International wheat prices take their cue during the summer from weather's impact on spring crops in the northern hemisphere. "Prices during the winter will reflect demand, particularly from feed wheat consumption and economic reforms in Eastern Europe," he says.

Pearson bases his forecasts of Alberta-based prices on high international feedgrain prices and continued strong world wheat demand. He says the most likely range for total Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) wheat payments are between $140 and $160 per tonne for #1 CWRS wheat and between $120 and $140 for #3 CWRS.

Canadian wheat production is forecast at 26.5 million tonnes. Canadian wheat supplies are forecast to grow by five per cent from 1989-90 to 32.4 million tonnes.

As with other classes of wheat, durum prices are expected to bottom during the summer and then improve during the winter, staying close to 1989-90 levels, he says. Pearson forecasts the most likely range for #1 Amber Durum (Alberta-Based CWB) at $140 to $160 per tonne.

30

Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

World oilseed stock limits canola prices

Canadian canola supplies will be extremely tight in 1990-91, says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst, but price improvements will be limited by the world oilseed situation.

"Even with above average yields, Canadian canola supplies will be very tight in the coming crop year. The tight Canadian canola supply demand balance isn't reflective of the world market," says Charlie Pearson in a quarterly oilseed situation and outlook report. "A large South American soybean crop and the probability of a large American crop this fall will keep a cap on Prairie canola prices."

Canadian canola production is estimated to be 3.3 million tonnes, up eight per cent from 1989-90. The production forecast is based on a average yield of 23 bushels per acre.

Pearson says inadequate Canadian canola supplies and poor crush margins because export markets will pay premium canola prices, will mean under utilization of domestic crush capacity again in 1990-91. Total 1990-91 domestic crush is forecast at 1.2 million tonnes, similar to 1989-90 levels, and 60 per cent of the total available capacity.

Pearson says he expects Alberta 1990-91 elevator/crusher bids in the $270 to $300 per tonne range, similar to the past crop year's prices.

Flax prices, however, probably won't return to the highs of this past winter, he says. 1990 flaxseed production is forecast at 900,000 tonnes, up 70 per cent from 1989. Alberta 1990-91 prices are forecast in the $240 to $280 per tonne range, a 15 to 25 per cent decline from the 1989-90 average.

30

Contact: Charlie Pearson
427-5386

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Low bloat alfalfa possible by mid-1990s

An Agriculture Canada researcher predicts the one flaw in the queen of forages may be diminished by mid-decade.

Alfalfa is known as the queen of forages to agricultural producers because it has a number of major advantages. It can: survive temperatures between minus 40 and plus 50 degrees Celsius; is highly drought tolerant, long-lived as a perennial and dual-purpose as forage or hay; improves soil by biologically fixing nitrogen and conserves soil by providing organic matter and acting as a cover crop; and, produces the most protein per acre of any crop with a high feeding value and even has the potential to have its protein extracted for human nutrition. These advantages make it an extremely popular crop with producers, but there is a deterrent.

"In spite of all the advantages, the main disadvantage is the capacity to cause bloat," says Bernie Goplen, an Agriculture Canada researcher who has been working with alfalfa and bloat for the last 20 years. This disadvantage is a deadly and costly one. Bloat cost Canadian farmers an estimated $25 million in 1985, he says. American costs are about four times that amount.

Goplen told audiences at educational seminars during the annual Alberta Dairy Congress in Leduc, alfalfa with low bloat potential could be available by 1995. This alfalfa won't be completely bloat-safe, he says, but will have a much reduced bloat potential. Biotechnology, he adds, may have the key to a bloat-safe alfalfa.

Currently the Agriculture Research Station in Saskatoon is beginning its fourth cycle of breeding selection for low bloat alfalfa. Breeding research on bloat-safe alfalfa cultivars started in Saskatoon in 1970. Goplen has worked there since then, and currently heads the forage crops section. In the first three breeding cycles, researchers were able to reduce bloat potential by about 75 per cent. Goplen says they'd like the number to be closer to 100 per cent before it's released for general use.

(Cont'd)

Low bloat alfalfa possible by mid-1990s (cont'd)

Researchers in Goplen's group have related the bloat potential to how quickly alfalfa is broken down as it's digested in a cow's rumen, the first stomach. In experiments including non-bloating legumes, they found alfalfa was more fragile and broke down more rapidly releasing proteins, or foaming agents, similar to those in egg whites. This foam traps gas in the animal's rumen. So instead of the cow belching out the gas, trapped gas collects, plugs the opening to the esophagus and can cause the stomach to swell or bloat. Trapped gases can swell the rumen enough to put pressure on the heart and lungs and asphyxiate the animal.

Goplen says development of the low bloat potential alfalfa is only an intermediate step to a bloat-safe alfalfa. "I believe very firmly, ultimately a bloat-safe alfalfa will be achieved by biotechnology and the development of a high tannin alfalfa variety," he says.

Biotechnology will enable researchers to put the non-bloating characteristic of a legume called sainfoin into alfalfa. The characteristic is condensed tannin which slows down the initial fermentation and therefore digestion in a cow's rumen. The tannin precipitates, or chemically removes, the foaming agents so they are so longer part of the digestive process.

None of the 33 annual or 26 perennial alfalfa species contain tannin, Goplen says. As well, there is no way to naturally crossbreed alfalfa and sainfoin. However, biotechnology's gene transfer process puts a bloat-safe alfalfa into the realm of possibility. If biotechnology can successfully add the tannin trait, a new generation of alfalfa varieties will be created that will be palatable and bloat-safe, says Goplen.

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

25th anniversary celebrations highlight 1990 4-H conservation camp

Alberta's 4-H Conservation Camp celebrated its 25th anniversary by breaking sod for a new environmental interpretive centre.

Grant MacEwan, longtime conservationist and former provincial lieutenant-governor, broke sod for the facility with a horse and plow. MacEwan once owned the 58-hectares site on Battle Lake, now the provincial 4-H centre. He sold the property to the 4-H Foundation in 1977 with the assurance 4-H would protect the environmentally sensitive area.

Major funding for the environmental facility, scheduled for completion next June, is co-sponsored by Alberta Power Limited and TransAlta Utilities. Both companies, original and continuing sponsors of the conservation camp, have contributed $10,000 to the project.

"The interpretative centre will strengthen awareness of the camp's conservation theme and serve as an introduction to the current nature trail system," says Henry Wiegman, camp director and specialist with Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch.

The sod turning ceremony was the finale of the annual six-day camp. 4-H campers from across the Prairie provinces and Montana participate in a combination of classroom activities and field trips to learn about conservation. Each of the 66 delegates concentrates on two of five resource areas that include forest, soil, water, range and fish and wildlife. Group and study sessions are led by resource specialists from Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Environment, Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife, Olds College and the sponsoring utility companies.

"A camp highlight is a mock development hearing where delegates take on roles to examine an environmental issue. It helps them appreciate the complexity of environmental decisions," says Wiegman.

MacEwan also presented the 1990 conservation award named for him to Deanna Brown, of Tofield. The annual award is given to the conservation camp delegate who best communicates the conservation message in the year following the camp.

30

Contact: Henry Wiegman 427-2541
Dan VanKeeken 420-7090
Mona Hari 498-7032

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Soil conservation professor appointed

A soil conservation research professorship has been created at the University of Alberta.

Agriculture and forestry dean, Edward Tyrchniewicz and Bob Bogle, Alberta Agricultural Research Institute chairman, announced the new position earlier this month.

R. Cesar Izaurralde has been named to fill the position as research professor of soil conservation in the university's soil science department.

The professorship is one of four initiated by the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute, the co-ordinating body for agricultural research conducted in the province. The soil conservation professorship is a joint venture with the Canada-Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI), a major program established by the federal and Alberta governments in July, 1989.

Izaurralde's new responsibilities include development of research and extension programs in cropping systems and soil conservation. One of his first priorities is to familiarize himself with current conservation programs and problems specific to Alberta. He has already visited agrologists and farmers in Airdrie, Lethbridge, Coaldale, Brooks, Oyen and Hanna. As well, he is currently planning two research programs with colleagues at the University of Alberta, Alberta Agriculture and Agriculture Canada.

Problems related to soil degradation, including wind and water erosion, have received considerable media and research attention in recent years. While much is now known about the prevention of soil degradation, serious problems still exist, in part because recommended conservation practices aren't yet widely implemented by farmers.

"Dr. Izaurralde will play an invaluable role in Alberta's soil conservation efforts, in helping transfer available resource management information directly for farmers and to the public, and in developing and encouraging research work where gaps in our information still exist," says Tyrchniewicz.

(Cont'd)

Soil conservation professor appointed (cont'd)

"The Alberta Agricultural Research Institute is pleased to support a position which will help the province's farmers gain access to the information they need to protect the productive capability of our soil resource for current and future generations," says Bogle.

Izaurralde is a native of Argentina, where he completed the equivalent of a BSc at the Universidad Nacional de Cordoba. He also studied at Kansas State University, received a MSc in soil conservation and management in 1981 and a PhD in soil fertility in 1985. He joined the University of Alberta's soil science department as a research associate in 1986.

"Dr. Izaurralde has broad experience in agronomic research, extension and teaching," says Tyrchniewicz. "His knowledge and abilities will be valuable assets to the department of soil science, and he will provide an important link between the department, the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute and the wider agricultural community."

30

Contact: Ralph Christian
422-1072

J.A. Robertson
492-0191

Cesar Izaurralde
492-5104

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Alberta Agriculture undergoes departmental reorganization

A closer link between agricultural production and marketing will be achieved through a reorganization of Alberta's Department of Agriculture.

"In the interest of an even closer and more effective working relationship between Alberta Agriculture's production and marketing divisions, the two have been amalgamated to reflect the increasing market orientation of the department," says Ben McEwen, Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister.

The six divisions of this new sector are plant industry, animal industry, animal health, marketing services, market development and rural development. Barry Mehr, former assistant deputy minister for marketing, will head this new production and marketing sector.

This change is only one of the reorganizations prompted by the recent retirements of assistant deputy ministers Harold Hanna, production, and Bill Dent, field services. All changes were effective August 7.

Assistant deputy minister Doug Radke will lead an expanded planning and development sector. "Consistent with the department's consolidation of all major policy related activities within this sector, the trade policy secretariat will now report directly to Mr. Radke," says McEwen.

Central program support will also now report to the planning and development sector. "This move recognizes the developmental nature of many of those programs, as well as the efficiency gains from consolidating administration of all special programs," he says. To this end, the Crow Benefit Offset Program administration, including the 1990 Farm Income Assistance Program, will be added to the responsibilities of the administrative director of central program support.

As well, Irene Leavitt has been confirmed as assistant deputy minister of field services, a position she has held in an acting capacity since early May. A departmental competition will be held to choose her successor as director of rural services.

30

Contact: Ben McEwen
427-2145

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Alberta Agriculture Appointments

NEW PLANNING SECRETARIAT MEMBER

Barbara Stroh is the newest member of Alberta Agriculture's Planning Secretariat. Stroh has spent 21 years working for the department in various capacities. Most recently she worked as the field services sector's extension specialist for eight years. In her capacity as a secretariat member, she will be involved in strategic, policy and program planning and evaluation with a primary emphasis on human resource planning. She will also continue to represent Alberta Agriculture on the interdepartmental committee on women's programs. "I'm very pleased to welcome Barbara to the secretariat. Her experience and expertise in staff training and development will be important to the department, particularly in the area of strategic planning and management," says Ken Beswick, the secretariat's chairman. "I'm looking forward to taking on new challenges and opportunities of my new position," Stroh says. "As well, I'm excited about adding my experience and perspectives to the secretariat team." She holds a BSc in home economics from the University of Alberta and has completed master level course work in adult education, communication and evaluations. She joined the secretariat on August 1. She can be reached in Edmonton at 427-2417.

TABER HAS NEW DISTRICT AGRICULTURIST

Tilly Gamble is the new Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Taber. Gamble moved to Taber after spending nine months training at the Westlock district office. She spent two summers as an assistant district agriculturist, first in Vermilion in 1988 and then in Claresholm in 1989. She also spent two summers working as a weed inspector for the Municipal District of Starland. "The Taber area is very diverse and I'm enjoying learning more about the specialty crops

(Cont'd)

TABER HAS NEW DISTRICT AGRICULTURIST (cont'd)

produced here, as well as meeting with producers and producer organizations," she says. As district agriculturist, she will provide information and educational programs to farmers and farm organizations. Gamble graduated from Olds College's agronomy program in 1986 and completed a BSc in agriculture at the University of Alberta in 1989. Gamble hails from Bassano where she was raised on a mixed farm. She can be contacted in Taber at 223-7907.

DAIRY PRODUCTION SPECIALIST APPOINTED FOR NORTH EAST REGION

Ed Chell is the new Alberta Agriculture north east regional dairy production specialist based in Vermilion. Dairy production specialists inspect producer facilities and provide extension information on milk quality to dairy farmers. Prior to joining Alberta Agriculture, Chell was employed by Palm Dairies in Edmonton as a production supervisor and Clean-in-Place (CIP) operations supervisor. He received his BSc in food science from the University of Alberta in 1987. After graduation, he took part in an international student exchange program for technical experience and worked for a German government diary research institute. He was born in Claresholm and also has called Wetaskiwin, Calgary and Edmonton home. Chell can be contacted in Vermilion at 853-8109.

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

FARM FUEL PROGRAM CHANGED

The eligibility criteria for the Alberta Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance (AFFDA) has been changed. The minimum annual farm income required to qualify for this program has been increased from $2,500 to $10,000 effective August 1. Provincial Treasurer Dick Johnston and Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley made the announcement. The AFFDA program subsidizes farm fuel prices by 14 cents per litre (63 cents per gallon) for gasoline and 19 cents per litre (86 cents per gallon) for diesel fuel, including exemption from Alberta's seven cents per litre fuel tax. In order to qualify, farming must be on a commercial scale, as measured by annual gross farming receipts. "The AFFDA program is now targeted more specifically towards commercial farming operations," says Johnston. "The change in the minimum income requirement will ensure that this program meets that objective." Isley says Alberta farm fuel prices are the lowest in Canada. "Most other provinces exempt farmers from paying all or part of their fuel taxes. Only in Alberta do farmers receive full fuel tax exemptions plus a substantial grant. The total cost to the government in 1990-91, including foregone revenue, is estimated to be $158 million," he says. Alberta Treasury will soon be providing farmers will instructions on how to qualify under the new criteria. The procedure will be simple and straight forward to minimize disruption to farmers' busy fall schedule. For more information, contact Myles McDougall, office of the Treasurer, 427-8809.

REFERENCE MANUAL FOR FARM ENTERPRISES AVAILABLE

A reference book with farm business information about eight major farm enterprises is available to readers who want expert knowledge to make improved decisions. Typical successful farm operations are described with details on production management, capital requirements and

(Cont'd)

REFERENCE MANUAL FOR FARM ENTERPRISES AVAILABLE (cont'd)

financial factors. Financial and non-financial measures are suggested as ways to analyze the farm business and achieve key results. Alberta Agriculture specialists prepared the enterprise sections of the manual dealing with beekeeping, beef, crops, dairy, poultry, sheep, swine and horse farm enterprises. The manual was compiled by Craig Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch, and it was printed by Olds College. The manual is updated and used for an annual five-day agricultural lenders workshop. Extra manuals are also made available each year at a cost of $35. "Farmers, as well as agricultural consultants and educators, will benefit by having this hand book as a reference. It provides much information about enterprises into one book and saves a lot of time for the people who use it," says Edwards. Anyone interested in the manual, can contact Cindy Turner, at Olds College extension services, at 556-8339.

HISTORIC CATTLE DRIVE FUND RAISER FOR A WESTERN HERITAGE CENTRE

Recreating an historic cattle drive for the 40 miles between Sibbald Flats and Cochrane will raise money for a Western Heritage Centre in Cochrane. The fund-raising drive, slated for September 26 through 30, offers three ways to participate: donating livestock, rider or teamster; cash to purchase livestock, rider or teamster participation; or, a donation of livestock or cash without riding along. Food for participants and feed for livestock will be supplied throughout the drive. Cattle donations will be received from across Western Canada. The registration cut-off is September 1. When the cattle reach Cochrane, they will be sorted and sold at an auction. Organizers hope to have about 1,500 head. All proceeds from the auction will go the heritage centre building fund. Administration costs and expenses will be met from sponsorship and souvenirs sales. For more information about the "Hooves of History" cattle drive, contact the Cattle Drive 1990 office at 932-4611 or 932-4021 (FAX 932-4656).

(Cont'd)

RAM TEST STATION SALE ANOTHER SUCCESS

The top indexing ram at the 16th annual Alberta Ram Test Station Sale sold to an American buyer for $700. The Suffolk ram from the flock of Dennis Rasichney, of Redwater, had an average daily gain of .652 kg/day. The same buyer, Allan Hankel, of Lisbon, North Dakota, also paid the top price of the day, $900, for another Suffolk ram. An average price of $349.56 was paid for 54 rams. Sixteen of the rams sold went to out of province buyers from Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and Manitoba. Just over 200 rams from 37 breeders were entered on test this year. Only rams above the station average for average daily gain for their breed are considered for sale. A culling committee then further looks at teeth, legs and testicles. The Alberta Sheep Breeders Trophy for the highest group average daily gain for four or more rams went to Cyril Seutter, of Sherwood Park. His five Suffolk rams averaged .545 kg/day. A new test station record for the Romanov breed was set at .407 kg/day. Clun Forests, Rideau Arcotts and Finnish Landrace were tested for the first time in 1990. The Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers trophy for the yearling with the highest overall index on the wool breeds test went to John Balderson Farms of Magrath. The test station and sale are held at Olds College. For more information about the test station and sale, contact Cathy Gallivan, Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist, in Airdrie at 948-8517.

CANADIAN CHAROLAIS BULL EXPORTED TO BRAZIL

For the first time, a purebred Canadian Charolais bull from Western Canada is going to Brazil. "This could be the opening of a tremendous market opportunity in Brazil for Canadian Charolais cattle," says Ken Aylesworth, Canadian Charolais Association general manager. The movement of this bull to Brazil is significant because of its impact on a hurdle in place for the last 25 years--acceptance of Canadian purebred Charolais pedigrees in Brazil. Brazilian breeders are now looking to Canada to improve genetics in their country. A recent delegation of Brazilian cattlemen to Canada spent about $500,000 on cattle purchases across the nation. For more information, contact Aylesworth in Calgary at 250-9242.

AGRI-NEWS

August 20, 1990

For immediate release

This Week

Agricultural trade mission successful.....1

August 31 application deadline for Farm Income Assistance program.....4

Hog prices remain strong.....5

Slaughter cattle supply predicted tight this fall and winter.....7

Slow turnaround forecast for lamb prices.....9

July wet, except in northern Alberta.....10

Harvesting garden vegetables.....12

New field services assistant deputy minister appointed.....14

Briefs.....16

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

Agricultural trade mission successful

Alberta's Associate Agriculture Minister has returned from a three week trade mission whose focus was an 11 day visit to the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) to explore trade opportunities for Alberta's private sector.

Representatives from Alta Genetics, Independent Breeders, the Alberta Wheat Pool, Alsask Processors and Agriteam Canada joined Shirley McClellan on the mission.

The mission resulted from a protocol signing during a visit by RSFSR officials to Alberta in May. The protocol committed Alberta to exploring mutually beneficial economic opportunities with the RSFSR that have developed due to recent political and economic changes. The protocol falls under the umbrella of a co-operation agreement in agriculture signed between the two parties in 1986.

The Alberta delegation visited state and collective farms and met with officials in Khabarovsk, Novisibirsk, Ufa, and finally Kurgan, where they were joined by officials from Orenburg. As a result of the contacts made, five memoranda of agreement were signed and another two memoranda are under advisement. It's expected that these letters of intent will lead to contracts valued in the millions of dollars for Alberta businesses.

In Moscow, as a conclusion to the Soviet leg of the mission, McClellan and Anatoly Ustjuzanin, Minister of Agriculture and Food Procurement for the RSFSR, signed a protocol stating both governments' support of the private sector and state and collective farm initiatives and a commitment to help approved projects obtain financing. The ministers also expressed an intention to explore ways in which agricultural extension services in the RSFSR could be developed.

(Cont'd)

Agricultural trade mission successful (cont'd)

"As a first-time visitor to the RSFSR, I was struck by two things. First, the country is remarkably similar to our own in many respects, and shows tremendous potential for agriculture. Second, I was overwhelmed by the enormous challenges facing the RSFSR as it moves from a planned to a market-driven economy. Tremendous opportunities exist for Alberta's agribusinesses in the RSFSR, particularly in dairy and beef cattle genetics and crop improvement. All sectors are thirsty for new technology and eager to benefit from Canadian expertise. Clearly, their high regard for Alberta's industry is an asset to any business contemplating trade with the RSFSR," says McClellan.

In light of the outstanding importance of international trade to Alberta, McClellan met in Geneva with trade representatives and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) officials. The purpose of the meetings was to convey her concern regarding the need for a successful resolution of the GATT agricultural negotiation. GATT negotiators are forging a framework for international trade liberalization which, if successful, will open new markets and opportunities for Alberta. McClellan says she is guardedly optimistic that a general agreement will be ready by the December deadline; however, she indicates key players remain divided on some major issues.

"The outcome of these negotiations will have a major impact on our province," says McClellan, "And, I impressed upon the negotiators our desire to see trade barriers come down and a level playing field created for Alberta products."

The trade mission included a Tokyo stop-over, to follow up on contacts made during her mission to the Pacific Rim in November, 1989. The itinerary included a visit with Alberta's biggest beef customer in Japan, the Tomin Seikyo retail co-operative. Representatives of Tomin Seikyo were in Alberta last week to learn more about beef industry. McClellan was pleased with the tremendous success in Japan of the Canada Beef Export Federation, which has supported impressive sales increases for Canadian beef processors. At least 80 per cent of Canadian beef products going into Japanese market are supplied by Alberta.

(Cont'd)

Agricultural trade mission successful (cont'd)

Also as part of the trade mission, a meeting was held in Paris with Hermes, a major international fashion house known for its high quality leather merchandise. Hermes conducted a pilot project in Alberta which showed Alberta hides to be superior to Hermes' traditionally-sourced hides. Based on the success of the project, Hermes intends to expand its procurement program in Alberta.

McClellan concluded her mission in London, where she met with officials from Hillsdown, the company that recently purchased one of Alberta's largest agribusinesses, Canada Packers Inc.

"This mission was successful in strengthening trade relationships in markets that are fundamentally important to Alberta agricultural producers and processors. It becomes obvious very quickly that we are living in a time of rapid globalization, and it is important that we as Albertans take advantage of the many exciting opportunities that exist throughout the world," she says.

30

Contact: Louise Riopel
422-9156

Barry Mehr
427-2442

David Chalack
Alta Genetics
239-8882

Alex Kowalchuk
Alberta Wheat Pool
290-4658

Bob Francis
Agriteam Canada
253-5298

David Black
Independent Breeders
946-5667

Andy Bernard
Alsask Processors
476-1366

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

August 31 application deadline for Farm Income Assistance program

Alberta farmers have until the end of this month to apply for assistance from a $100 million federal/provincial assistance package.

"Farmers must apply for the assistance through their local Alberta Agriculture district office," reminds Don Scheer, program administrator.

All farmers in the province are eligible for a payment of $4.10 per acre on all 1989 improved seeded acres, including forages. Payments won't be made on acres that were in summerfallow. Also excluded are forage acres on which claims were made through the Northwest Alberta Disaster Assistance Program and cultivated land covered by Crown grazing leases.

Farmers will receive an initial payment of 85 per cent of their claim. After all applicants have received their initial payment, remaining funds will be distributed. "We hope to have all the first payments made by mid-September," says Scheer.

There is also a second component of the income assistance program. Southeastern farmers in the Multi-Year Disaster Benefit (MYDA) area that have suffered consecutive drought years have been targeted for an additional payment of $3 per cultivated acre, excluding summerfallow and irrigated land. To be eligible for this extra payment, producers must farm in Special Areas 2, 3 and 4, the County of Paintearth or the Municipal Districts of Cypress, Acadia and Provost.

The package, with $89 million from the federal government and a $11 million contribution from the provincial government in addition to its 1990-91 budget enhancements, is designed to offset farm income losses from poor weather, high input costs and low world grain prices.

For more information about applying for this assistance, contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture district office.

30

Contact: Don Scheer
422-0015

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

Hog prices to remain strong

Alberta hog prices will follow prices in the United States and stay well above year-ago price levels for the remainder of the year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Ron Gietz predicts third quarter producer payment prices between $1.65 and $1.75 per kilogram this month and next, and between $1.50 and $1.60 for the final quarter of the year. A seasonal low demand for pork is likely to occur in December, he says.

"Prices similar to these forecasts would ensure moderate profitability for Alberta hog producers, particularly given current expectations of lower barley prices this fall," says Gietz. He adds no payouts from the national tripartite stabilization program are expected for the remainder of the year.

His price predictions are based on the continuation of a strong Canadian dollar through the summer, with a slight drop to the 85 cent U.S. level by December. "This change in the Canadian dollar may be somewhat optimistic, given the current high interest rates around the globe," he says. "Persistent strength of the Canadian dollar vis-a-vis its U.S. counterpart limited the extent of price gains in Canadian hog markets this spring," he adds.

The 1990 "bull" slaughter hog market stalled during the second quarter of the year, concluding one of the most rapid periods of the price increases in the last decade. Demand drove the price rally's early stages through the winter. "By the second quarter, large year-over-year declines in hog slaughter drove prices further upwards. Eventually, consumer resistance to high retail level prices pressured prices back to more sustainable levels. but not before record high prices were recorded in U.S. markets during the final week of May," he says.

Alberta's producer payment price for Index 100 hogs during the second quarter averaged $1.65/kg, 34 per cent higher than the average for the April to June, 1989.

(Cont'd)

"Canadian slaughter hog prices were definitely high enough to push producer returns into the black. For the first time in two years, no payout was announced for hogs under the national tripartite stabilization program," he says.

Large declines in slaughter hog output occurred everywhere in Canada except Alberta in the second quarter. Across the nation, there was a nine per cent decline in total output. Provincially, production was down only a single percentage point from 1989 levels. "Reduced July marketings of slaughter hogs suggest Alberta's hog industry is also entering a period of lower production," notes Gietz.

30

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

Slaughter cattle supply predicted tight this fall and winter

A number of indicators point the way to a tight supply of slaughter cattle in Alberta through the fall and winter says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

In a quarterly "Livestock Situation and Outlook", Ron Gietz says five trends show growing evidence of the tight supply. Leading the list is a record-breaking pace--up 16 per cent--of cattle slaughter exports. "This figure defies some forecasts that a new slaughter facility in the province would reduce the volume of fed cattle exports. After a year's operation, large numbers of live cattle are still going south," he says. A scarcity of fed cattle in nearby U.S. markets have American buyers looking north for supplies. As well, the lack of harmonized grading and inspection systems still favors live trade at the expense of the beef trade, he says.

Other factors in the potential tight supply are a nine per cent increase in cattle slaughter and a halving of slaughter imports into the province during the first half of the year. "Add in, that feeder cattle imports are about one-third less and out-of-province feeder shipments are up 44 per cent, and you're left with a shortfall, maybe as much as over 200,000 head through the fall and winter," says Gietz.

Two factors temper the likely shortage, he says. Recent beef herd expansion produced about 100,000 more feeder cattle in last year's crop. As well, he says, slaughter and export trends should ease during the second half of the year. "The end result of this tight local supply shapes up as favorable to fed cattle prices," he says.

The main point of fed cattle price uncertainty is what happens in the U.S. market through August and September. Gietz says he favors the view U.S. fed cattle prices will be under some pressure through August, but not drop below 1989 price levels. September, he adds, will be a transition month leading into tighter supplies and higher prices for the final three months of the year.

(Cont'd)

Slaughter cattle supply predicted tight this fall and winter (cont'd)

"This U.S. outlook translates into fed cattle prices in Alberta running above 1989 levels for the remainder of the year. The major unknown, once again, is the value of the Canadian dollar," says Gietz. With a strong Canadian dollar, Gietz predicts third quarter prices in the $80 to $84 per hundredweight (cwt.) range moving higher to between $83 and $87 in the final quarter and down a dollar at each end of the range for the first quarter of 1991. Alberta fed cattle prices during the second quarter averaged three per cent above 1989 levels.

Gietz notes the continuing strength of the Canadian dollar vis-a-vis its American counterpart prevented the market here from approaching record high levels of 1987's second quarter.

Feeder cattle prices posted large increases from April through June led by an extremely buoyant American market. This recent price strength, coupled with weakness in barley prices have improved the outlook for the fall feeder run, he says. Gietz has revised his outlook upwards and predicts a $95 to $100/cwt. range for 800 to 900 pound steers; $110 to $105/cwt. for 600 to 700 pound steers; and, a $105 to $115/cwt. range for 500 to 600 pound steers.

Price strength was also reflected in the national tripartite stabilization program. Payments were announced for only a single month--$10.83 per head in May--for slaughter cattle.

During the second quarter Alberta beef production patterns continued to run contrary to trends in other provinces. "Steady increases in cattle feeding activity and fed cattle production continue to be the dominant aspect of Alberta's beef industry," he says.

Gietz also notes if the cattle slaughter in eastern Canada continues at its present pace for the remainder of 1990, the region will record its smallest slaughter numbers since 1961.

30

Contact: Ron Gietz
427-5376

August 13, 1990
For immediate release

Slow turnaround forecast for lamb prices

Despite a dismal first half of 1990, there are some signs a slow turnaround is coming for Alberta lamb producers says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"Currently beef and pork prices are running at or near historical highs in both Canada and the United States," says Jo Ann Cmoluch. "Although this doesn't mean large numbers of consumers are expected to switch to lamb, it does give some assurance present lamb consumers won't turn away from lamb and might even increase their lamb consumption."

Cmoluch forecasts the third quarter Lambco bid range at between $59 and $62 per hundredweight with the fourth quarter range a dollar lower at each end.

Large slaughter volumes in the U.S. have had a detrimental effect on Alberta markets. American slaughter volumes have run about five per cent ahead of 1989 totals. The overall weak condition of the American sheep industry has been reflected in feeder lamb prices that are currently below slaughter prices, she says.

The extent of price declines in slaughter lamb markets during the second quarter of 1990 revealed the full impact of an oversupply of sheep in the U.S. and to a lesser extent in Canada, she says. "Without adjusting for inflation, prices producers have been receiving for their market lambs haven't been this low since the mid-1970s." While the Easter holiday season did push bid ranges slightly higher--between $69 and $72/cwt.--than during the first quarter, prices didn't hit the "spike" usually associated with the season, she adds.

Federally and provincially inspected slaughter volumes were two per cent higher in the second quarter this year than in 1989. The Alberta total was 21,218 head.

30

Contact: Jo Ann Cmoluch
427-4002

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

July wet, except in northern Alberta

July precipitation was kind to most Alberta farmers says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"Generally, farmers saw good moisture from rains. There was some flooding in central Alberta in early July. In contrast, there were hot dry conditions in the Peace River Region," says Peter Dzikowski, of the conservation and development branch.

Heavy rainfall in early July, especially in central Alberta, contributed to precipitation amounts ranging up to 250 per cent of the monthly normal in some locations, he says. Edmonton International Airport reported 149.3 mm during the month. This was 163 per cent of normal for July. Among other stations reporting higher than monthly average totals were Claresholm at 96 mm, 251 per cent of the norm, and Lloydminster at 142.9 mm, 181 per cent of the July average. (See attached map.)

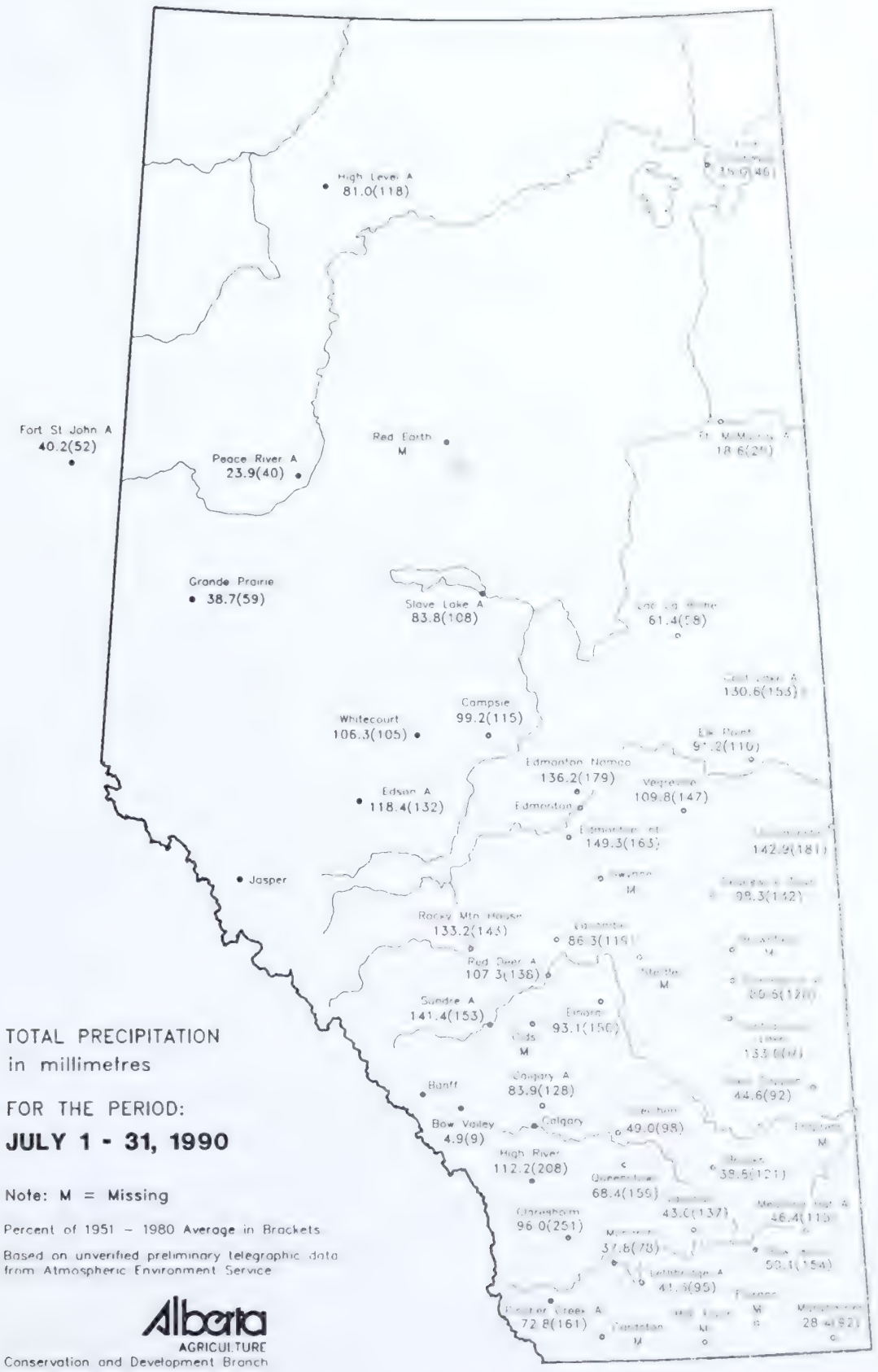
The Peace River region was drier than normal for July with rainfall totals about half of normal. Peace River, for example, reported 23.9 mm of precipitation, 40 per cent of the monthly normal. Grande Prairie reported 38.7 mm, 59 per cent of normal.

Temperatures were near normal for the month. In early July and mid-month, temperatures were cooler than normal. Warm temperatures were recorded the second and last weeks of July. Average monthly temperatures were about one degree above normal in the Peace River region, near normal in central regions and close to one degree cooler than the average in southern Alberta, he says.

Hot and dry conditions, including record breaking temperatures, continued into early August in all regions of the provice, he says.

30

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385


High Level A
81.0(118)
Fort St John A
40.2(52)
Peace River A
23.9(40)
Red Earth
M
Grande Prairie
38.7(59)
Slave Lake A
83.8(108)
Whitecourt
106.3(105)
Campsie
99.2(115)
Edson A
118.4(132)
Edmonton Namao
136.2(179)
Jasper
Rocky Mtn House
133.2(145)
Red Deer A
107.3(136)
Sundre A
141.4(153)
Banff
Bow Valley
4.9(9)
Calgary A
83.9(128)
Calgary
High River
112.2(208)
Claresholm
96.0(251)
Coaldale A
41.3(95)
Lethbridge A
72.8(161)
TOTAL PRECIPITATION
in millimetres
FOR THE PERIOD:
JULY 1 - 31, 1990
Note: M = Missing
Percent of 1951 – 1980 Average in Brackets
Based on unverified preliminary telegraphic data from Atmospheric Environment Service
Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Conservation and Development Branch

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

Harvesting garden vegetables

Succulent corn and the sweetness of vine ripened tomatoes are two rewards of a summer vegetable garden says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Knowing when those vegetables are ready to harvest or how to ripen vegetables picked before a frost are two common question gardeners ask us," says Pam North, information officer at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre. "Most of the common questions are about corn, tomatoes, onions, squash and pumpkins," she adds.

One indication corn is ready to eat is dry, brown corn silk. Cobs should be checked to see if there are kernels to the tip, indicating the cob is full. Kernels should be at the milk stage.

"Check by piercing a kernel with you fingernail. If a white milky liquid squirts out, then the corn is ripe. If the liquid is clear, then the corn is still immature. If it's lumpy, then the cob is over-mature. While still edible, the over-mature corn won't be as sweet," she says.

Corn not used immediately after it's picked should be cooled, she adds. Cooling will preserve sweetness, as sugar is converted to starch as soon as the corn is harvested. The corn can be refrigerated or soaked in ice water.

Vine ripened tomatoes are another popular garden item. North says gardeners can promote vine ripening by pruning new flowers and topping staking varieties after August 1.

"Pruning flowers and topping the plants will allow the plants to put energy into the existing fruit," she says.

Although vine-ripen tomatoes are a goal, sometimes the late summer and early fall weather doesn't co-operate so, tomatoes have to be harvested when they are green.

(Cont'd)

Harvesting garden vegetables (cont'd)

"Tomatoes will ripen indoors, but keep them in a sunny windowsill rather than wrapping them in paper and storing them in a box. Sun ripened tomatoes will have 50 per cent more vitamin C than those ripened in the dark," she notes.

Pruning vines to prevent flowering after August 1 on winter squash and pumpkin plants, will also encourage those vegetables to ripen. Squash is mature when a thumbnail can't break the skin of the squash, she adds.

Onions are ready to harvest when the tops fall over naturally. "Breaking over the tops is not recommended because those onions won't mature properly or store as well.

"To promote maturity, withhold water after August 15. Also, you can lift onions slightly with a garden fork to break the feeder roots," says North.

After harvest the onions need to be cured at a warm temperature (26 to 30 degrees Celsius) for a week to ten days. The tops will dry and the skin will get papery, and the onions will store better, she says. Onions should be stored at zero to three degrees Celsius.

For more information about harvesting, ripening and storing vegetables, contact North at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton at 422-1789.

30

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

New field services assistant deputy minister appointed

Alberta Agriculture has a new assistant deputy minister officially at the helm of the field services sector.

"I'm pleased to announce Irene Leavitt is confirmed in her appointment of assistant deputy minister, taking on duties she has held in an acting capacity since early May," says Ben McEwen, Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister.

The field services sector includes the rural services division (agricultural education, agricultural engineering, home economics, agricultural and community services and 4-H branches), the information services division and the department's six administrative regions.

IRENE LEAVITT

"Mrs. Leavitt brings invaluable experience to her new position through her many years of service within the sector she will now head," says McEwen.

Leavitt started work for the department as a district home economist in 1958. She worked out of the Claresholm and Calgary office from then until 1973. She worked at the regional level for three years counselling and advising farm families through the federal Small Farm Development Program. Between 1976 and 1987, she headed the home economics and 4-H division. Most recently, she held the position of rural services division director from 1987 until earlier this year.

Leavitt says she looks forward to continuing work with producers, farm families and rural organizations. "My career has been highlighted by meeting and working with the people of Alberta's agriculture and food industry. It's been gratifying to see people reach their goals and know the small ways you've been involved in their success," she says.

(Cont'd)

The three months she's spent in the acting role gave her a glimpse of her new responsibilities. "I'm looking forward to the opportunities and challenges presented in working with the diverse and complex field services sector. I'm confident about the abilities of the sector's staff, and look forward to working with them and the industry," she says.

Leavitt's appointment came shortly after she received a Canadian Society of Extension honorary life membership award. The award recognizes persons who merit national attention for noteworthy accomplishments in extension or teaching. Length, dedication and noteworthy service in the field of extension along with other outstanding achievements and peer recognition are award criteria. Recipients must be nominated by five of their peers.

"It was a thrill and privilege to be honored by my peers and fellow extension workers. It's very fulfilling to receive this kind of recognition," Leavitt says.

Leavitt was cited for placing emphasis on improved farm management practices, increasing the profile of 4-H and home economics and her role in developing a strategic direction for Alberta Agriculture. In announcing the award, the society said: "Her dedication and work ethics are standards for others to follow. Irene Leavitt combines technical expertise with experience, confidence, judgement, ambition, leadership, drive, a natural sense for smart decision making and the ability to play effectively on a team".

Throughout the years, she has also taken an active role in a number of professional and other organizations including the Canadian Society of Extension, the Canadian 4-H Council and the Alberta Home Economics Association. She received a distinguished service award from the Alberta Home Economics Association this April.

Leavitt is originally from Saskatchewan and is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan's BSc in home economics program.

30

Contact: Ben McEwen
427-2145

Irene Leavitt
427-2440

August 20, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

COMBATING CUCUMBER SCAB

Garden clean-up and using new cucumber cultivars are two ways to battle a cucumber fungus that appears in many gardens during the summer says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist. "While cucumber scab is fairly common, warm humid weather brings more cases of the fungus to our attention," says Pam North, information officer at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre. Symptoms of cucumber scab can be found on both leaves and fruit. The most noticeable damage is on the fruit, with the small water soaked spots the first signs of cucumber scab. The spots can eventually cover the entire fruit. On larger cucumbers, the lesions look tan or corky. Humid weather produces spores that give the spots a greyish-green color. A brownish liquid sometimes is exuded and crystallizes. Pale brown spots may appear on the leaves. A protective fungicide, benomyl, can be used to control the spread of the disease. "Before you spray, note the number of days required between spraying and harvest," cautions North. "If you want to prevent cucumber scab next year, there are steps you can take. Sanitation is very important. Remove all cucumber vines and dispose of them. Don't dig or till them back into the garden," she says. Rotation is also important. "Don't plant cucumbers in that spot for at least three years," she advises. She also says to try new cultivars that are resistant or tolerant to cucumber scab. This information is given in seed catalogues and on some seed packages. For more information, contact Pam North at 422-1789.

1990 FERTILIZER, HERBICIDE AND GRAIN SEEDING CUSTOM RATES

Custom charges in 1990 for applying fertilizer and herbicides and seeding grain were very similar to last year's rates. A province-wide survey completed by Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch in July shows no significant changes to either higher or lower rates, says Craig Edwards, of the farm business management branch in Olds. The survey,

(Cont'd)

Agri-News briefs (cont'd)

1990 FERTILIZER, HERBICIDE AND GRAIN SEEDING CUSTOM RATES (cont'd) conducted by Maureen Whitlock, includes custom rates for applying granular and liquid fertilizer by airplane, floaters, truck mount, pull type and air seeder applicators. The most common rates charged were between $2.25 and $3.50 per acre. Aerial liquid herbicide application cost between $2.50 and $4.35 per acre. Higher rates charged were for most water used per acre. Applications by trucks, floaters and pull types ranged between $2.25 and $3 per acre. Seeding by disc and hoe-drills, air drills and air seeders ranged between $3 to $10 per acre, with the most common rate between about $6 and $7 per acre. The detailed report is available by contacting Edwards in Olds at 556-4248 or Whitlock in Edmonton at 427-4011.

GREAT PLAINS CLIMATE CHANGE AND VARIABILITY SYMPOSIUM IN CALGARY

Alberta Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley will give the keynote address to delegates at a Canada-United States symposium on the impact of climatic change and variability in the Great Plains. The symposium, September 11 through 13 in Calgary, will bring together managers, planners and scientists who are concerned about the effects of climate on the resource base of the North American Great Plains region. Presentations will address possible regional and international impacts of global warming in the region and examine the vulnerability of the Great Plains to climatic variability and change in finer detail. Following plenary sessions, the symposium will break into working groups that will look at agriculture, water resources, forestry, wetlands and wildlife, energy, transportation and recreation and rangelands. The symposium is a follow-up to an earlier joint conference held in Chicago in 1988 that examined climate change in the Great Lakes region. It's sponsored by Environment Canada's Canadian Climate Centre and Inland Waters Directorate and the U.S. National Program Office of the Climate Change Program. For more information, contact Rick Lawford in Saskatoon at (306)975-5756, Ken Hubbard in Edmonton at 472-6706 or Tim Goos in Edmonton at 495-3143.

(Cont'd)

ROYAL BANK JOINS AIC IN TWO PROJECTS

Canadian agrologists will benefit from two projects the Royal Bank has undertaken with the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC). The bank has become a charter member of a new research foundation set-up by the AIC to help scientists present position papers. Through a $50,000 five year contribution from the bank, professional agrologists across the nation will find it easier to keep up to date on current agricultural information. The AIC represents over 5,000 professional agrologists in 19 member organizations across Canada. Throughout its history, the AIC has collected and analyzed information on current issues. The Royal Bank and AIC also joined together in sponsoring a memorial scholarship honoring a pioneer in agriculture finance. Doug McRorie had a close involvement with the AIC and spent 22-years with the Royal Bank. Through his guidance, the bank introduced using professional agrologists in agricultural financing. McRorie passed away in September, 1989. The memorial scholarship fund will provide a scholarship to each agricultural faculty in Canada. Both announcements were made at the recent AIC annual convention in Penticton. For more information, contact Terry Hockaday in Calgary at 252-5822.

BIOFERTILIZER RESEARCH FUNDED

Esso Chemical Canada is expanding research and development efforts into a variety of biofertilizer for wheat and canola with assistance from the Western Economic Diversification program and the Alberta Agricultural Research Institute. Both are contributing just over $200,000 to the project. It's the first project in Alberta to receive assistance through the National Agricultural Biotechnology Initiative. Preliminary research by Esso indicates biofertilizers could enhance crop yields by more than 10 per cent putting more than $100 million in the pockets of Western Canadian farmers. The biofertilizer is plant growth promoting rhizobacteria (PGPR). The PGPRs increase crop yield by enhancing fertilizer and moisture absorption. Because they occur naturally in soil, they're environmentally friendly. For more information, contact Ralph Christian in Edmonton, at 422-1072.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News briefs (cont'd)

THIRD ANNUAL 4-H P.D.P. PROGRAM SUCCESSFUL

4-H members from all over Alberta enjoyed the People Developing People (PDP) '90 program in late July. This personal development camp for 13 and 14 year olds took place at the Alberta 4-H Centre at Battle Lake. The PDP delegates had many positive comments about their experience. "PDP means fun, friends, learning about yourself and others, signing mega autographs and taking tons of pictures!," said one delegate. Another added "Overall PDP was a 12 out of 10." The theme of the program, "Being Part of the Big Picture", directed delegates to examine themselves and their relationship to the world around them. In small and large group settings, delegates explored topics such as self concept, leisure, decision making, positive thinking, risk taking and environmental issues. One unique aspect of the PDP program is the special interest sessions. Each 4-Her chooses two of these sessions during the week and have an opportunity to give suggestions about what they'd like to do in their sessions. This year's special interest session choices included kite making, creative arts, movie making, outdoor camping, game shows, and outdoor recreation.
In its third year, PDP is made possible by sponsors: Alberta Wheat Pool, United Grain Growers, Agriculture Canada, Alberta Agriculture and Husky Oil. For more information contact, Anita Anderson at the 4-H branch at 422-4444.

IDENTIFY EDIBLE WILD PLANTS WITH VIDEO AID

An hour long video now available for loan through Alberta Agriculture's Film Library can help you to identify edible wild plants. Renowned botanist and author Jim Duke and Indiana University instructor Jim Meuninck take viewers afield, foraging for useful wild botanicals. Learn to identify 100 edible wild plants, discover new recipes, make herbal teas, sample "berry-delicious" desserts and identify poisonous plants. For lending information, write the Film Library at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6 and ask for "Edible Wild Plants" (VT 930-26).

AGRI-NEWS

August 27, 1990

For immediate release

SEP 1 0 1990

This Week

Alberta beef production environmentally friendly.....1

Beef's fifth quarter value.....4

Beef part of balanced diet.....6

Farmers' Advocate assists with MUST program.....8

Battle of the Breeds new feature at Spruce Meadows.....10

Horse and horsemanship clinic part of Equi-Fair.....12

Horse Improvement Program identifies best in Alberta horses.....13

Alberta Agriculture veterinary lab fees change.....15

Briefs.....16

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Alberta beef production environmentally friendly

Cattle and beef have been much maligned lately, and haven't deserved the reputation some people have tried to give them says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"People who are aren't fully familiar with how beef is produced and who haven't looked at all of the issues which must be considered when assessing the impact of beef production on the environment, have made statements founded on partial truths," says Ross Gould, of the beef cattle and sheep branch. These partial truths have included: beef production is an inefficient use of resources because the amount of feed needed per pound of carcass beef; beef production is immoral because their feed would be better used to feed a starving world; and, beef production should be limited because cows produce methane, a greenhouse gas that changes our climate.

"When each of this statements is considered together with other important environmental issues and all the facts about beef production, the conclusion is quite different," he says.

Beef production, like all human activity, says Gould, does have an impact on the environment. "Negative aspects, such as methane production have been overblown. Methane from beef cattle does contribute in a very small way to the greenhouse gases. But it's just one source and not a major source. The North American cattle population contributes less than 0.2 per cent of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Far more critical is burning of plant and fossil fuels."

Other sources of methane include rice paddies, swamps and muskeg. Termites and other wood digesting insects are a major source ot atmospheric methane, he adds. The most rapidly growing source of methane in the environment is from garbage disposal at landfill sites.

At the same time, beef production's positive role in sustainable agriculture has been overlooked, he says. Crop rotation systems with grasses and legumes are one effective way of preventing soil erosion and increasing soil organic matter.

(Cont'd)

"Beef cattle and other ruminants make an important contribution to conserving and improving our soil resource by converting grasses and legumes from crop rotations into a productive crop.

"Without the income from these 'grass convertors', most farmers wouldn't be able to afford the cost of crop rotation systems. This is one reason forage rotations got left out of cash crop farming during the 1970s and early 1980s when returns from beef production were very low," he says.

The grass convertor cow also makes more of Alberta's occupied farm land capable of food production. About half, or 23.7 million acres, of Alberta's farm land is in range, pasture and hay. "Most of this land wouldn't produce food without a ruminant animal to consume the grass," says Gould.

Cattle and other ruminants are different than other meat animals because most of their feed--grass, hay and straw--are types of plant material non-ruminants, including humans, can't digest. This limits the amount of grain necessary in beef production.

"While it's true the beef production system can take a total of 12 pounds of feed per pound of live beef, the typical finished beef animal in the system will only have consumed 2.2 pounds of that feed as grain. This is because the cow that produced the calf will eat very little grain and the typical finished steer or heifer will be on a high grain diet for about three and half months of its 16 month life," he says.

A close comparison of feed efficiency between cattle and other meat animals also casts beef in a favorable light. "The most valid assessment of meat production efficiency is a comparison of feed grain consumed per pound of muscle tissue produced," says Gould.

A typical grade A steer's carcass has 60 per cent muscle tissue. This translates into 38 per cent of the steer's live weight. In comparison, muscle makes up 36 per cent of the live weight of a hog and 32 per cent of the live weight of a chicken.

(Cont'd)

In terms of feed consumption, the steer would have consumed 6.3 pounds of grain per pound of edible meat, a pig 8.2 pounds and a chicken 5.9 pounds. "These figures show the efficiency of converting feed grain to edible meat are very similar for each of our major meat species," points out Gould.

Feeding cattle grain also effects the taste of beef. Scientists have proven feeding grain to cattle improves the taste and tenderness of their meat. "These qualities are what the consumer wants, so it's important for marketing the product," he notes.

Some people will still ask, why feed grain to cattle when there's world hunger, he says. "One reason is because humans and cattle basically consume different grains. Human consumption is mostly wheat and rice, while cattle primarily eat barley and corn.

"If there was a high enough human demand for feed quality grains to raise the price to more than double current levels, much less would be fed to cattle. Cattle have always been one way for farmers to realize a return from their grain crops when surpluses depress prices.

"But beyond this, is the simple fact that world hunger is a political and economic problem, not a production problem."

30

Contact: Ross Gould
427-5083

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Beef's fifth quarter value

Most people associate beef with backyard barbecued steaks or a family Sunday roast beef dinner, and don't realize beef's products extend beyond the popular cuts of meat seen in their local supermarket.

"There's a wide range of variety meats, other edible by-products plus inedible by-products and pharmaceuticals that come from beef cattle," says Kathy Keeler of the Beef Information Centre in Calgary. "Most people don't have any idea how many things they use in a day are beef by-products of some sort, whether it's a leather belt, their lipstick, soap or an allergy medicine."

A 1,000 pound animal will yield about 435 pounds of retail beef including steaks, roasts, ground beef and stewing meat. Specialty meats such as liver, kidney, sweetbreads, heart, tongue and tripe are additional types of meat available from a beef animal.

Other less well-known edible by-products include: oleo stock, derived from beef fat for margarine and shortening; oleo stearine, used to make chewing gum and certain candies; gelatin from bones and horns for marshmallows, ice cream, canned meats and gelatin products; and, natural sausuage casing from intestines.

Inedible by-products cover a range of uses. The best known of these by-products is leather. Hides also supply felt and the base for insulation materials. Fine ear hair is used to make artist brushes.

"Many everyday items have an ingredient derived from beef," Keeler says. For example, beef tallow provides glycerine for lipstick, face and hand creams, toothpaste and cough medicine. Commericial soaps, industrial cleaners, shampoos, liquid soap and detergent also are derived from tallow. Inedible fats are also used for candles, fabric softeners, automobile tires, adhesives, crayons, chalk, explosives, inks and matches.

Bones, horns and hooves are an ingredient source for buttons, bone china, piano keys, glues, fertilizers and animal feeds. They also supply non-edible gelatin for photographic film, wallpaper, sandpaper, toothbrushes and violin strings.

(Cont'd)

Cattle are also walking store houses for hundreds of pharmaceuticals, says Keeler. "The list of pharmaceuticals is lengthy. These drugs range from treatments of minor ailments like an upset stomach to blood clots in heart vessels. Blood products are important to cancer and other research. Insulin for diabetics was first taken from cattle pancreases.

"The many examples of the good things besides meat that come from cattle shows how important cattle are to our way of life, not just for their contribution to balanced and healthy diets," says Keeler.

Economically speaking, the beef cattle industry is also a major contributor to Alberta's economy, she adds. It's estimated to now generate about $6 billion annually.

30

Contact: Kathy Keeler
275-5890

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Beef part of balanced diet

Reducing or removing beef from your diet, isn't a way to improve your health says Alberta Agriculture's provincial food and nutrition specialist.

"Most people are rightly concerned about the amount of fat in their diet, but cutting out red meat entirely is an over reaction. Moderation works, and that way you aren't missing any nutrients," says Aileen Whitmore.

Protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins are among the nutrients in meat necessary for a healthy diet. Beef is especially important for the iron it supplies. "The iron in beef is easily absorbed by the body--more easily absorbed than the iron in fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals or iron enriched vitamins," says Whitmore.

"Meat in your diet also increases the absorption of iron from other foods," she adds, "So if you are on a calorie reduced diet, include beef to help avoid iron deficiencies." Low fat cuts of beef include: round, flank, ribeye, rump, sirloin, sirloin tip, stewing beef, strip loin steak and wing steak.

Nor is the fat in beef, and other meats, all bad, she says. Fat provides energy, aids in the absorption of fat soluble vitamins and provides essential fatty acids.

"You also have to remember today's beef is lean. It's 50 per cent leaner and has 21 per cent less cholesterol than it had 15 years ago," she says. Lean means no more than 10 per cent of fat per serving as defined by Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada nutrition labelling guidelines.

Furthermore, if you compare beef to chicken without its skin and fish, the ounce-to-ounce comparison of fat and cholesterol are very similar, she says.

"If you still have concerns, remember a low fat diet doesn't have to avoid beef and other red meats. Reducing fats can be accomplished by cutting out unnecessary fats in a variety of ways," she adds.

(Cont'd)

Trim fat from steaks and buy well-trimmed cuts with slight marbling, she advises. Cook meat so fat can drip away, avoid frying that adds fat and calories. Also avoid gravy, sauces and breading. But, reducing fat isn't limited to choosing and preparing beef and other meats, she says.

"Drink skim milk instead of whole milk, use calorie reduced salad dressing, have two slices of toast instead of a croissant or bake a potato instead of having french fries.

"Think about the peanut butter sandwich before you make it. A 30 gram slice of beef has 108 fewer calories and 12 grams less fat than 30 mL of peanut butter," she says.

Read the label on processed products, she adds. "You can save both fat intake and calories. Water packed tuna has 54 fewer calories and six less grams of fat than tuna canned in oil."

30

Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Farmers' Advocate assists with MUST program

Alberta Agriculture's Farmers' Advocate's office can now assist rural residents concerned about pollution of their domestic water source from underground storage tank leaks.

"The Farmers' Advocate's office will be acting in conjunction with Alberta Environment in the Management of Underground Storage Tanks (MUST) project," says Cliff Downey, the Farmers' Advocate. "The program will be handled in the same manner as our Water Well Restoration or Replacement program."

Potential program applicants are rural residents who have reason to believe their domestic water source has been polluted by leakage from underground storage tanks that have been abandoned or are of unknown or indefinite ownership.

"Before an application can be submitted, the resident has to contact the service station, oil company or whoever they believe owns the tank, to attempt settlement of alleged damages," says Downey.

If these attempts with the company are unsuccessful or if the company involved is unknown, the applicant contacts Alberta Environment's MUST project for an investigation. A report is then made to the Water Well Restoration or Replacement Committee. Downey notes applications must be made within two years of the alleged damages. "Applications won't normally be approved if the responsible party is known and is still operating a business, since it would then be possible to pursue the complaint in a different manner," he adds.

Because the program is designed to offset direct costs to restore or replace a water well, vent a building or make other corrective measures, the applicant must include all receipts for work completed with the application. The applicant also must attend and present evidence at a committee hearing held in his or her home area. The committee includes the Farmers' Advocate as its chairman, the chairman of the local agricultural development committee or another local authority representative and a technical representative from the environment department's groundwater protection branch.

(Cont'd)

Following the hearing, the committee forwards its decision to Alberta Environment. If the decision is in favor of the applicant, then a payment is made by that department.

"All payments awarded under this program are ex gratia. In other words, they are not made due to any legal or statutory obligation, so decisions are final and not subject to appeal," says Downey.

Inquires about the program can be made at the Farmers' Advocate office, 305, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6, 427-2433 or the MUST Project, 14th floor, Standard Life Centre, 10405 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 3N4, 427-3943.

30

Contact: Cliff Downey
427-2433

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Battle of the Breeds new feature at Spruce Meadows

Ten horse breeds will compete in eight skill testing events as part of a showcase of Alberta horses at Spruce Meadows September 5 through 9.

"This new feature, Battle of the Breeds, will be an exciting and fun part of the Alberta Breeds for the World showcase. The competitive events will run through the entire fair with a winner crowned on the final day," says Bob Coleman of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch.

Teams of four horses and riders will compete in trail riding, barrel racing, team relays, jumping, obstacle driving, a champagne ride and a free style event. "Free style is much like a short program in figure skating done with music and in costume to entertain and inform the audience," notes Coleman.

Alberta Breeds for the World features 20 horse breeds providing visitors with an opportunity to see and find out more about the different breeds. Breed association representatives will be on hand with booths and exhibits. Three demonstration rings will show off the diverse abilities of the various horses from a child's pony through sport horses to heavy horses. A sales barn and horsemanship seminars are also part of the activities in the Breeders Hall.

The Masters show jumping competition and the Equi-Fair equine trade show are the two other major attractions at Spruce Meadows.

"The Masters quite simply is one of the best show jumping events in the world, a genuine outdoor equine spectacle with Olympic caliber riders and horses. The million dollars in prize money also makes it one of the richest events," says Coleman. Sunday afternoon's du Maurier International is the crowning event of the international show jumping activities.

"Whether you're an equine enthusiast or not, or just enjoy horses a little, the jumping competitions are well worth seeing," he says.

This year's Equi-Fair trade show has been expanded with larger space in its USA Pavilion, a new British Columbia Pavilion and with New Zealand represented for the first time.

(Cont'd)

Battle of the Breeds new feature at Spruce Meadows (cont'd)

Coleman describes Equi-Fair as the best equine trade fair in North America with leading edge technology on display along with clothing, art, management systems and equipment from worldwide exhibitors.

Spruce Meadows is located one km south of Calgary on Highway 2 and two km west on Highway 22X.

For more information about these activities contact the horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650, in Edmonton at 427-8905 or Spruce Meadows at 254-3200.

30

Contact: Bob Coleman
436-9150

Les Burwash
297-6650

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Horse and horsemanship clinics part of Equi-Fair

Horsemanship clinics will be offered through the entire five days of this year's Alberta Breeds for the World at Spruce Meadows.

"We've expanded the number of clinics to run through the weekend," says Bob Coleman, of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch.

Horse enthusiasts will have the opportunity to learn more about the basics of grooming, the Horse Improvement Program evaluation system, what to expect from riding lessons and using acupuncture on horses through free educational seminars. Each seminar will be held at least twice, with the exception of the acupuncture, between September 5 and 9.

"With more people getting involved in horse sport, we recommend they start by getting lessons to learn how to ride properly and to help them enjoy the sport more," says Coleman. This seminar will focus on what students in riding programs should expect from their lessons. "Parents with children in riding programs or parents contemplating the idea will find this seminar very worthwhile," he adds.

Another seminar will explain the provincial Horse Improvement Program evaluation system. Horses are evaluated against a breed standard and scored on both conformation and performance. Identifying superior horses and breeders is a major goal of the program.

Al Klide, from the University of Pennsylvania, will share his knowledge about using acupuncture on horses.

More information about the seminars is available by contacting the horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650 or in Edmonton at 427-8905.

30

Contact: Bob Coleman
427-8905

Les Burwash
297-6650

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Horse Improvement Program identifies best in Alberta horses

An annual program to identify superior horses, breeders and trainers in the province runs two consecutive September weekends at the Westerner in Red Deer.

Eleven breeds will be scored in the five categories of the Horse Improvement Program (HIP) judging system. The system allows for independent evaluation that is different and more complete than what is associated with show ring judging, says Bob Coleman, of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch.

"It's a really unique type of evaluation. Owners can see through the individual category scores what judges really liked about their horse. A horse with really strong characteristics, and maybe some weaker characteristics that need to be corrected in a breeding program, can be scored accordingly," he says.

"The program is also different from a typical horse show because horses are judged against a breed standard rather than against other horses in the ring," adds Coleman.

The horse industry branch, in co-operation with a committee from participating breed associations, has been running the program for the last 16 years.

The 1990 program features: Arabian, partbred Arabian and walking horse classes on September 15; American Saddlebred, Morgan, sport horse and Welsh pony and Cob classes on September 16; Quarter Horse and Pinto classes on September 22; and, Appaloosa and Paint classes on September 23.

Two horse show judges and an equine veterinarian score each horse on conformation and performance. Conformation includes five categories: front limbs; hind limbs; head, neck, body and balance; movement; and, type. Performance patterns test the athletic ability, temperament and training potential of the young horses. Score sheet appraisals are mailed to the entrants.

(Cont'd)

Horse Improvement Program identifies best in Alberta horses (cont'd)

One of the goals of the Horse Improvement Program is education. Coleman says it's hoped the evaluations will be used as an educational tool by breeders and owners.

"One of the program's overall goals is improving the quality of Alberta bred horses. The program is achieving that through both education and identification of superior horses, breeders and trainers," he says. He adds establishing markets for Alberta bred horses is another program objective.

Alberta born and Alberta owned rules are in effect in the classes.

Program judges will be: Wayne Houston, a professional trainer from British Columbia; Bob Mowrey, horse specialist at North Carolina State University; Don Topliff, Oklahoma State University professor; Dennis Sigler, a judge and trainer from Texas; and, Hanno Dohn, an accomplished horseman from Germany.

The deadline for entering the program is September 1. For more information, contact the horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650 or in Edmonton at 427-8905.

30

Contact: Bob Coleman
427-8905

Les Burwash
297-6650

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Alberta Agriculture veterinary lab fees change

Certain laboratory user fees and a new fee category will take effect September 1 at Alberta Agriculture animal health division veterinary laboratories.

"The increased fees and a new fee category for animals other than food producing and pet species is a necessary reponse in a time of fiscal restraint," says Nick Nation, head of the department's veterinary pathology branch.

The laboratory user fee for whole carcasses of agriculture and food animals will be $25 or $15 for a portion of a carcass. The charge for poultry from a flock of fewer than 300 birds is $15, $25 if from a flock with more than 300 birds.

The new fee for examination of dogs and cats will be $75 for whole carcasses of either or $50 for a portion of a carcass.

Each consignment of laboratory animal, wildlife and exotic species will be $35. "This $35 charge applies to either carcasses or portions from all non-farm and non-dog and cat categories," says Nation. "These charges now apply for all non-Alberta government submissions, including submissions from universities, zoos and federal and municipal governments which have been exempted in the past."

There will be a $100 fee for any post mortem examination for insurance purpose and or legal disputes, he adds.

Milk samples will now be $10 for the first sample and $2 for each additional sample in the consignment. The same fee structure applies to blood samples for clinical pathology. Blood for serology is $10 for the first antigen test and $3 for each additional antigen test per sample. Aleutian disease testing in mink is $10 for the first blood sample and 20 cents for each additional sample in a consignment.

30

Contact: Nick Nation
436-8903

August 27, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

HIKE FOR FARM SAFETY

Alberta Women of Unifarm have launched their annual campaign asking Alberta farm families to take a safety hike around their farm. Their new activity booklet, "Take a Hike for the Safety of Our Country Kids", encourages families to go around their farm together and point out hazards. Activity booklets and farm safety stickers are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Women of Unifarm directors or by calling the Unifarm office in Edmonton at 451-5912. Included in the package are stickers to write in local emergency telephone numbers and a sticker with the toll-free poison control centre number, 1-800-332-1414. Stickers can be used on the telephone, in the booklet or on farm equipment. For more information, contact the Unifarm office at 451-5912.

CALL FIRST, BEFORE YOU CAN'T

Over the last year more than 2,300 incidents of damage to AGT buried cables and service wires were reported. Those damages cost more than a million dollars to repair and disrupted everything from local telephone services to a national television signal. AGT and Alberta 1st Call are reminding people to call before they do any sort of digging. This includes farm operations such as deep tilling or subsoiling. "Because we have a commitment to provide our customers with exceptional service, we're very concerned about the impact damages to buried cable can, and does, have on the customer's ability to access our communications network," says Dale Wilson, AGT's cut cable liaison officer. By calling Alberta 1st Call, buried facilities of all types can be located before any excavation. This minimizes risks, reduces damage and minimizes service interruptions. For example, in 1989 AGT performed over 110,000 buried cable locates from requests received through Alberta 1st Call. The location service is provided free of charge. Two working days notice is required. Alberta 1st Call can be reached toll-free at 1-800-242-3447.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News briefs (cont'd)

INFORMATION DIRECTORY AVAILABLE FROM OLDS

Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch has updated a publication listing sources of farm management information. "Catalogue of Printed Farm Management Information from Alberta Agriculture", lists material available from the department's statistics branch, production economics branch, market analysis branch and farm business management branch. Included is information about the department's "Publication List", the primary listing for Alberta Agriculture publications. Most of the publications listed in the catalogue are free to farmers. Charges and subscription rates are shown where applicable. Mailing addresses and telephone numbers of the branches are also provided. For a copy of the catalogue, write Craig Edwards at the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, TOM 1P0 or call him at 556-4248. For a copy of Alberta Agriculture's "Publications List", which covers all farming topics including farm management, write to the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

NUTRITION CONFERENCE IN CALGARY SEPT. 12-14

An annual conference for feed industry personnel, nutritionists, extension workers, researchers and others interested in livestock production and nutrition will be held in Calgary September 12 through 14. The 11th annual Western Nutrition Conference features an opening day vitamin symposium. Among the topics on the conference agenda are: using peas in swine diets, trace minerals and immunology, feeding the equine athlete, selenium metabolism in the rumen, new methods of forage evaluation, protein and energy intergration applications in Western Canada, investigating nutrition problems, probiotics and using canola and flaxseed for poultry. For registration and other information, call Sheila at the University of Alberta at 492-3029.

AGRI-NEWS

September 3, 1990

For immediate release

This Week

Isley leads trade mission to Latin America.....1

Where to find harvest weather forecasts.....3

CARTT application deadline October 1.....6

Child's pay could pay.....7

Final honey tripartite payment approved.....9

Briefs.....10

Coming agricultural events.....12

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 3, 1990
For immediate release

Isley leads trade mission to Latin America

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley will embark on a two-week trade mission to Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Mexico August 25 to September 11.

The mission's main objectives are: to enhance lines of communication between Alberta and these countries; to review agricultural issues and developments, including the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN); and, to further promote Alberta's advanced livestock genetics and technology. Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico and Canada are all members of the CAIRNS group of countries promoting trade liberalization in agriculture.

Although Isley has travelled to Mexico before in an official capacity, this mission will be his first to Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay. He will be accompanied by a number of key private sector representatives.

The mission's first stop is Brasilia, Brazil, where Isley will meet with the Chief of the Economic Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform. In these meetings, Isley will discuss international agricultural developments, including MTN, bilateral co-operation, and agricultural trade opportunities between Alberta and Brazil.

While in Brazil, the minister and his delegation will attend the Expointer Livestock Show in Porto Alegre. The Expointer is the largest, most important show of its kind in South America, and the Alberta cattle breeders in attendance will find it useful for future trade contacts.

"All of these contacts in Brazil should cement Alberta-Brazil trade relations which have seen significant advancement since an extremely successful Brazilian cattle buying mission in Alberta this June," he says.

(Cont'd)

From Brazil, the minister will travel to Montevideo, Uruguay, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Mexico City, Mexico, where he will conduct meetings with his Latin American counterparts. They will be similar in content and importance to the meetings in Brazil. Isley will also have an opportunity to meet with a number of key industry figures from each country and visit some local ranches.

The final stop is Zacatecas City, Mexico. During a previous mission in October, 1989, a livestock co-operation memorandum of understanding was signed with the state of Zacatecas and its cattlemen's union. While in Zacatecas City, Isley will meet with the Governor of Zacatecas to discuss developments or issues arising from this agreement. Following these discussions, the minister will attend the Zacatecas State Livestock Exhibition.

"As a result of our high standards and advanced level of agricultural development and diversification, Alberta has gained a solid reputation within the Latin American agricultural community. This trade mission will further enhance this reputation, as well as open new channels of co-operation and communication, both in specific areas of trade and development and general trade policy issues," says Isley.

30

Contact: Arnold de Leeuw
427-4241

Doug Bienert
427-4241

September 3, 1990
For immediate release

Where to find harvest weather forecasts

Farmers can dial the Alberta Farm Weather Line or listen to Weatheradio Canada for weather forecasts to help schedule their harvest operations says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"Producers can telephone one of six regional Farm Weather Lines for the most current farm weather forecasts available," says Peter Dzikowski, of the conservation and development branch.

Alberta's Farm Weather Line, a co-operative service provided by Alberta Agriculture and Environment Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service, is in it's sixth season of operation. It brings farmers across the province up-to-date agricultural weather forecasts. The service expanded to six locations a year ago and also began year-round operation last fall after operating only between April and October.

Over 138,000 calls have been made to the service during the first seven months of 1990. "Continuous access to agricultural weather forecasts on a year-round basis assist producers in making farming decisions," he says.

Forecasts specific to each region are updated four times daily at 5:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Farmers call the weather line in their region. Long distance charges do apply. The telephone numbers are: Grande Prairie, 539-7654; Edmonton, 468-9196; Calgary, 295-1003; Lethbridge, 328-RAIN (7246); Medicine Hat, 526-6224; and, Coronation, 57-TEMPS (578-3677).

"The popularity of the year-round line means farmers may sometimes have trouble connecting with it, and get a busy signal. Farmers in the Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge areas have the option of listening to Weatheradio Canada instead," Dzikowski says.

Weatheradio Canada is a dedicated VHF-FM radio broadcast system transmitted on a frequency of 162.4, 162.475 or 162.55 megahertz (MHz). The Environment Canada service provides continuous, up-to-date weather forecast information and weather warnings directly from its weather office.

(Cont'd)

"A special weatheradio receiver, which costs about $60, is needed to receive the broadcast," Dzikowski points out.

The Weatheradio signal can be received within about 50 to 60 km of Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge, he says. Since transmissions operate by line of sight, reception may be poor in low-lying areas such as river valleys. "If you are considering getting a weatheradio receiver make sure it works at your location before you buy. If the signal is weak, an external antenna may help," he says.

Dzikowski also recommends buying a receiver with a warning alert feature and a battery back-up power source. Another important feature to look for is a switch, instead of a dial, to select the broadcast frequency.

For more information about the Farm Weather Line or Weatheradio Canada, contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

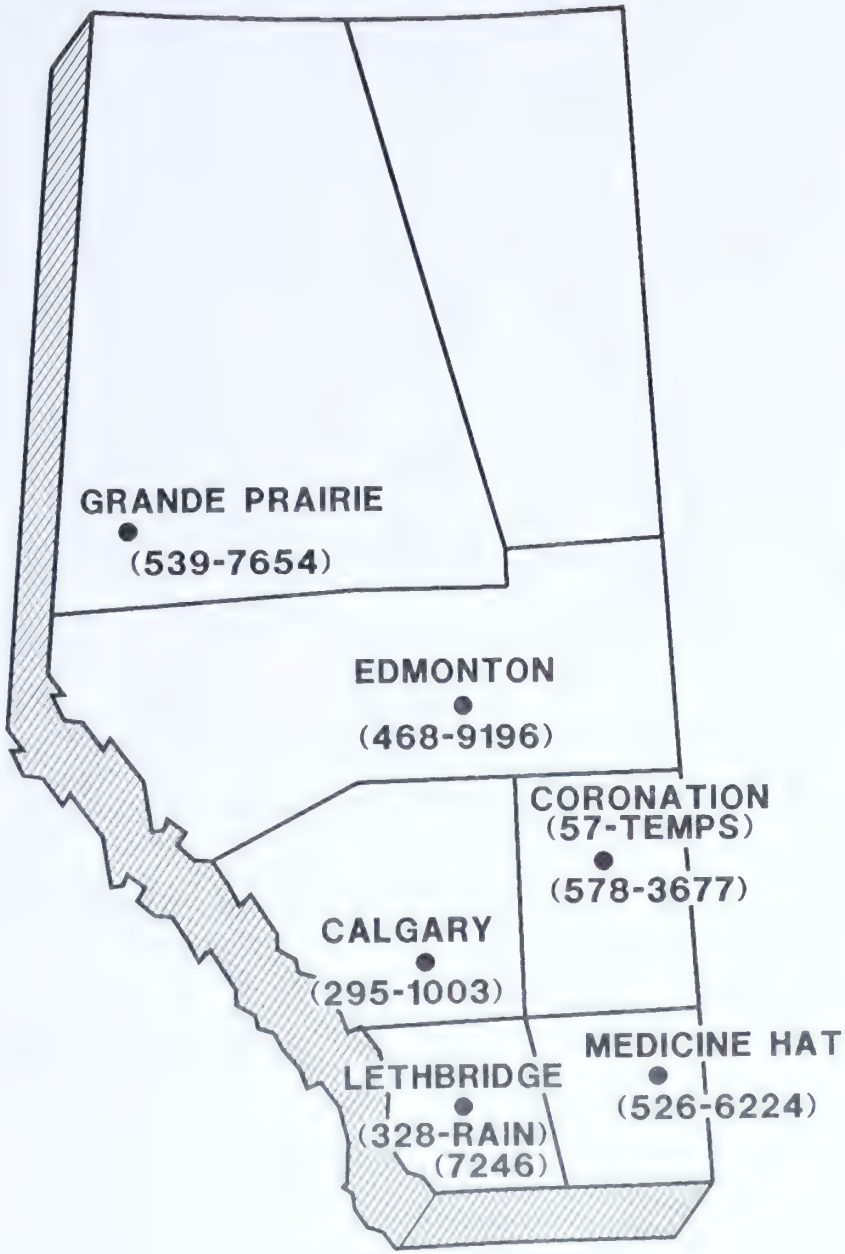
30

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

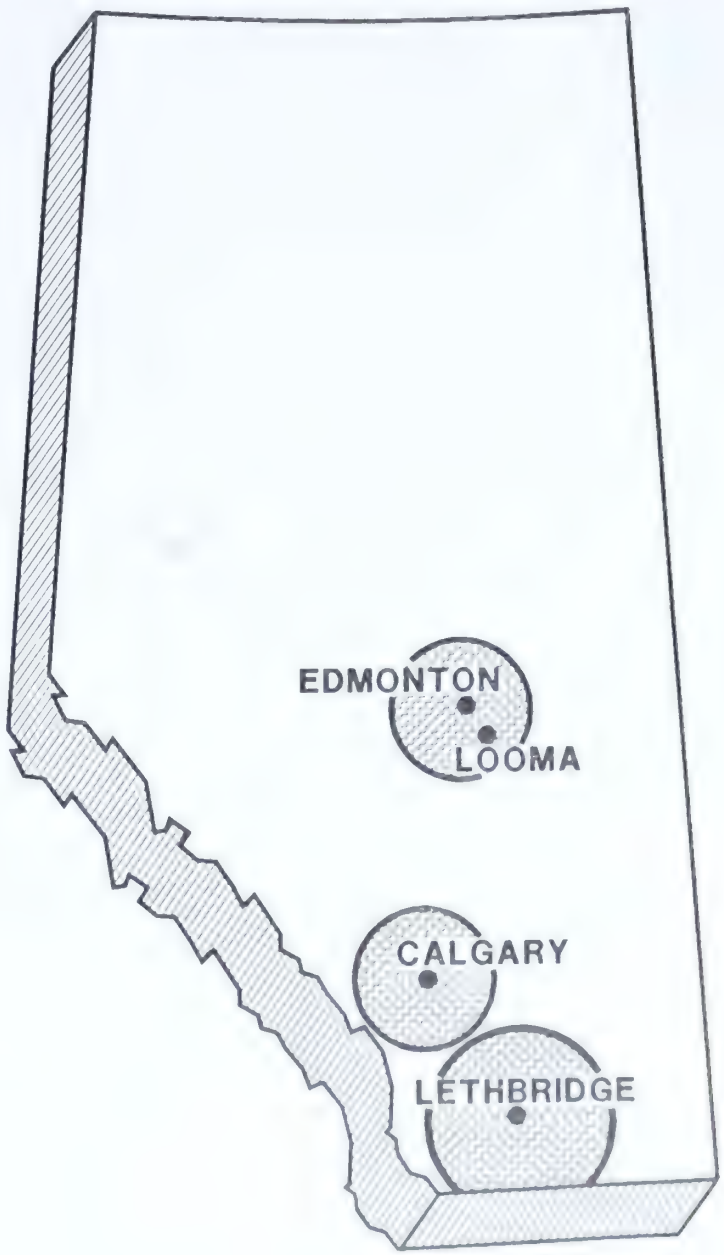
Editor's note: Maps are attached outlining the areas of the regional weather lines and the areas Weatheradio serves.

AGRI-SMEIN
Alberta Agriculture, Information Services Division

FARM WEATHER LINE



WEATHERADIO CANADA



September 3, 1990
For immediate release

CARTT application deadline October 1

October 1 is the next application deadline for project assistance from the Canada\Alberta agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) program.

"This application deadline is for projects starting after December 1, 1990," says Russell Horvey, provincial CARTT co-ordinator. Completed application forms must be submitted to one of six regional soil conservation co-ordinators by October 1.

Project proposals for demonstrations and awareness\technology transfer activities may be submitted to CARTT by any producer, producer organization, agricultural service board or any other organization interested in promoting sound soil and water conservation practices.

"If you have any questions or concerns about the deadline date, a project proposal or the CARTT approval process, please contact the regional soil conservation co-ordinator in your area or your local Alberta Agriculture regional office," he says.

Application forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, agricultural service board fieldmen, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) and Alberta Agriculture regional offices.

The 1991 CARTT application deadlines for project proposals are: February 1, for projects starting after April 1; June 1, for projects starting after August 1; and, October 1, for projects starting after December 1.

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

30

Contact: Russell Horvey
422-4385

September 3, 1990
For immediate release

Child's pay could pay

Paying your children for their work on the farm could increase your net after-tax family income says an Alberta Agriculture farm management economist.

"Any small business may deduct employee wages as a cost of doing business. For the farm family, this practice might be an overall benefit," says Doug Barlund, of the farm business management branch in Olds.

For example, take a farm business with a net income of $40,000. The after-tax income would be $30,915, if all the income is claimed by one person. "On the other hand, if the farmer claims $30,000 and pays his 17 year old son $10,000 per year as an employee, the overall net family income--after taxes and salary--becomes $34,016, an increase of roughly 10 per cent," says Barlund. Paying the same $10,000 salary to a spouse provides about a six per cent increase in after tax income for the family, he adds.

While the process sounds simple, there are a number rules to follow. The spouse, son or daughter must actually be doing work for the farm business and the salary must be commensurate with the work being done. "Consider paying what you'd have to pay someone else for the same job," he says.

As an employer, you must be registered with Revenue Canada for an employer's account number to start submitting payroll deductions. If you pay employees monthly, then you must submit monthly contributions of Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Unemployment Insurance Commission (UIC) premiums and Income Tax. As well, employers submit year end pay summaries along with T4 slips.

"Increased paperwork is a disadvantage, so are the added payroll expenses. Those have to be weighed against other advantages. The family's interest in farming may increase with monetary recognition of everyone's work. Making CPP contributions will make your spouse and dependent children over 18 eligible for the plan's retirement and disability benefits," he says.

(Cont'd)

Child's pay could pay (cont'd)

Alberta Agriculture has a new factsheet, "Paying Wages to Family Members-Is it Really Worth It?", that can help farm families decide if their business could benefit from this practice. The factsheet is available from the department's Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6 and quote Agdex number 823-3.

"The factsheet discusses the required payroll deductions and also answers some common questions," says Barlund. For more information, he can be contacted at the farm business management branch in Olds at 556-4245. He also recommends discussing salary options with an accountant or farm business consultant.

30

Contact: Doug Barlund
556-4245

September 3, 1990
For immediate release

Final honey tripartite payment approved

Honey producers can expect a final tripartite stabilization payment later this month.

The National Tripartite Honey Committee recently approved final stabilization payments on honey sold during the 1989 crop year. Producers enrolled in the national program will receive a final payment of 1.78 cents per pound for honey sold between June 1, 1989 and May 31, 1990, says Lloyd Andruchow, head of Alberta Agriculture's national tripartite speciality crops branch.

"Together with the interim payment approved earlier this year, the total payment for 1989 crop sales amounts to $2.475 million," he says.

Honey producers have already received an interim payment of 3 cents per pound for honey sold between June 1, 1989 and February 28, 1990. This second payment will include the same interim payment on honey sold during the remainder of the crop year. "We're expecting the second payment to be processed during the latter part of September," he adds.

About 200 Alberta honey producers are eligible for the stabilization payments. They'll receive a total of $1.1 million for honey sold during the 1989 crop year. Alberta is the dominant honey producing province nationally and accounted for 43 per cent of the honey sales registered in the 1989 crop year, he notes.

Stabilization payments are triggered when market prices drop below the support price. The 4.78 cent payment is the difference between the set support price of 51.25 cents per pound and the average market price of 46.47 cents.

Andruchow notes honey prices are better now. "Bulk honey prices have improved significantly over the past year, rising from the 43 cent level last August to the current price range of 53 to 55 cents."

Producers and both levels of government contribute to the stabilization fund through quarterly premium payments.

30

Contact: Lloyd Andruchow
422-5879

September 3, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

PEST BIOLOGICAL CONTROL WORKSHOP

The Alberta Environment Centre, in conjunction with Alberta Agriculture, is holding a workshop on biological pest control in Canada. The workshop is scheduled for October 11 and 12 in Calgary at the Carriage House Inn. Use of natural enemies to control a wide range of pests, from weeds to grasshoppers and from mosquitoes to forest insects, will be discussed. Papers by biological control experts covering progress in biological control in Canada, poster presentations with updates on individual projects and discussions of current issues affecting biological control are on the agenda. Anyone interested in non-chemical methods of pest control, will find it an opportunity to learn about what's happening in Canada and to meet researchers involved in the field. For more information, contact Dr. A.S. McClary at the Alberta Environmental Centre in Vegreville at 632-6761 (FAX 632-5475).

STANDARDS HANDBOOK FOR WEED AND BRUSH CONTROL

The Industrial Vegetation Management Association of Alberta (IVMAA) has developed a first of its kind handbook with guidelines for safe herbicide use. The "Handbook of Standards and Good Practices for Industrial Vegetation Management" also includes information about environmentally sound planning, operation of mechanical clearing equipment and developing worker training and emergency response programs. The handbook is the result of two years of extensive research and consultations with over 100 industry members, government representatives and environmentalists. Industrial vegetation management affects thousands of hectares of land throughout urban and rural Alberta. Sites where vegetation must be mechanically or chemically controlled to reduce safety hazards and permit open access include parks, highways, railways, powerline rights-of-way, oil and gas installations and other industrial and public areas. For more information, and to

(Cont'd)

Agri-News briefs (cont'd)

STANDARDS HANDBOOK FOR WEED AND BRUSH CONTROL (cont'd)
order copies of the handbook, contact the IVMAA, Box 9261, Station F, Calgary, T2J 6X9 or call 253-7700 or FAX 253-7713.

COMPOSTING SEMINAR AT OLDS COLLEGE SEPT. 25

A timely seminar on composting is scheduled for Olds College September 25. Keynote speaker Harry Hoitink, of Ohio State University, will discuss the principles of composting, composting systems and the benefits of composting in agriculture. "There is significant demand from industry to address concerns regarding large volumes of organic waste materials such as leaves, brush, grasses and kitchen waste," says Geraldine Byrne, of Olds College extension services. Landscapers and golf course managers are constantly faced with obtaining an inexpensive source of fertile top soil. Compost is a possibility as a fertilizer and soil conditioner says Byrne. Community groups are also expressing interest in both the science of composting and in community composting projects. Other seminar speakers are: Thom Rogers, Alberta Environment recycling co-ordinator, on a pilot project in Medicine Hat; Doug MacLennan, environment consultant to the Ryley community project on soil analysis, collecting and processing; Allan Yee, on Edmonton's composting project from feasibility to tendering; and, Larry Finn, on invessel composting. There will also be a panel discussion. To register, contact Olds College extension services at 556-8344.

SOIL SAMPLING HOW-TO VIDEO

Fred is a soil sampler who finds out that there's a lot more to his job than dumping dirt into a bag in a new Alberta Agriculture video. "How I became a soil sampling expert" (VT 533) explains how lab analysis is only as good as the sample submitted. This 13-minute production is an entertaining look at the proper procedures in taking effective soil samples. The video is available for loan from Alberta Agriculture district offices as well as the Film Library in Edmonton. For more information, write it at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Coming Agricultural Events

Olde Tyme Sheep Fair
Westerner
Red Deer ..... September 8 - 9
Barry Wilson – 556-8202 – Olds

Crop Protection Institute of Canada annual convention
Jasper Park Lodge
Jasper ..... September 9 - 12
CPIC office – (416)622-9771 – Toronto, Ontario

Canada/U.S. Symposium on climate change and variability on the Great Plains
Westin Hotel
Calgary ..... September 11 - 13
Tim Goos – 495-3143 – Edmonton

11th Western nutrition conference
Marlborough Inn
Calgary ..... September 13 - 14
Shelia – 495-3029 – Edmonton

AgTechnology'90
Sheraton
St. Louis, Missouri ..... September 17 - 20
AgBiotechnology News – (319)277-3599 – Cedar Falls, Iowa

International Plowing Match
Brant County, Ontario ..... September 18 - 22
John Fennel – (519)767-3506 – Guelph, Ontario

15th annual Poultry Servicemen's Workshop
Chateau Lake Louise
Lake Louise ..... October 2 - 4
Rod Chernos – 948-8533 – Airdrie

23rd International Dairy Congress
Montreal, Quebec ..... October 7 - 12
Richard Stern – (613)238-4116 – Ottawa, Ontario

Rural and small town Canada: Economic and social reality conference
Congress Centre and Statistics Canada
Ottawa, Ontario ..... October 17 - 19
Judy Buehler – (613)951-3779 – Ottawa, Ontario

National Outstanding Young Farmers awards
Stampede Park
Calgary ..... October 18 - 22
Don Stewart – 261-0162 – Calgary

Strategies for Success IV—Taking control of the Future (Beef Information Centre symposium)
Harbour Castle Westin
Toronto, Ontario ..... October 18 - 19
BIC – (416)766-6146 – Toronto, Ontario

Canadian Bankers' Association agricultural finance conference
Auberge de Seigneurs
St. Hyacinthe, Quebec ..... October 28 - 31
Cathy Frederickson – (416)362-6092 – Toronto, Ontario

Annual meeting Prairie Chapter International Society of Arboriculture
Mayfair Hotel
Edmonton ..... November 1 - 3
Brendan Casement – 422-1789 – Edmonton

Alberta Horticultural Congress and trade show
Calgary Convention Centre
Calgary ..... November 1 - 4
Simone Demers Collins – 427-7366 – Edmonton

1990 Alberta Women in Support of Agriculture conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer ..... November 15 - 16
AWSA office – 646-2059 – Nanton

Alberta Potato Marketing Board annual conference
Lethbridge ..... November 15 - 17
Jan Brown – 291-2430 – Calgary

Oat Producers Association of Alberta annual meeting
Convention Inn
Edmonton ..... November 21 and 22
Peter Kirylchuk - 623-5218 or Harvey Yoder -623-7732 – Lac La Biche

Marketing to the Environment (a seminar)
Delta Bow Valley Inn
Calgary ..... November 23
Eileen Grant – 266-0995 – Calgary

National awards program Canadian Agri-Marketing Association
Calgary Convention Centre
Calgary ..... November 23
Eileen Grant – 266-0995 – Calgary

Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association annual meeting, convention and trade show
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff.....November 28 - December 1
Judy Dreisig – 489-1991 – Edmonton

Canadian Forage Council conference and annual meeting
Fantasyland Hotel, West Edmonton Mall
Edmonton.....November 29 - December 1
Jerry Sykes – 623-5218 – Lac la Biche

Alberta provincial poultry and rabbit show Stampede Park
Calgary..... December 1 - 2
Don Stewart – 261-0162 – Calgary

Discover the Opportunities '90
Exhibition Centre
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan ..... December 6
Barry Swanson – (306)953-2770 – Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

Alberta Canada All Breeds Association livestock genetics marketing Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer..... December 12 - 13
Norma Dunn – 228-3467 – Calgary

1991

Unifarm annual convention
Mayfield Inn
Edmonton .....January 7 - 10
Willow Webb – 451-5912 – Edmonton

Western Canadian Wheat Growers annual meeting and convention
Victoria Inn
Brandon, Manitoba .....January 9 - 11
Regina office – (306)586-5866 – Regina, Saskatchewan

1991 Soil Conservation Workshop
Edmonton Inn
Edmonton, ...January 15 - 17
Peter Gamache – 422-4385 – Edmonton
Russ Evans – 936-5306 – Langdon

Alberta Farm Women's Network Conference
Camrose.....January 30 - 31
Donna Graham – 485-6384 – Vulcan

Western Barley Growers 14th annual convention and trade fair
Kananaskis Lodge
Kananaskis Village..... February 20 - 22
Anne Schneider – 291-3620 – Calgary

Women of Unifarm annual convention
Camrose.....June 18 - 20
Willow Webb – 451-5912 – Edmonton

Coming agricultural events

- Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in **December, 1990 or January, February or later in 1991**?Are there any events ommitted in the attached list?

- Please state the name of the event.

- What are the dates?

- Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel or convention centre, if known.

- Please give the name city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

- This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by November 23, 1990 to:
Agri-News Editor
Information Service Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6
(Coming Agriculture Events is published four times a year in Agri-News.
The next listing will be printed December 3, 1990)

AGRI-NEWS

September 10, 1990

For immediate release

This Week

Ergot infestations linked to soil copper deficiency.....1

Plan accessible farm office.....3

Workshops help farm home planning.....5

Conservation project direct seeds winter wheat.....6

Try fall seeding for earlier veggie crop.....7

Disaster assistance available for flooded farmers.....8

Federal-provincial agriculture ministers talk trade, policy review.....10

Briefs.....12

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Information Services Division

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Ergot infestations linked to soil copper deficiency

Recent research by a team of scientists from Alberta Agriculture's crop protection and soils branches has shown ergot infection in wheat and barley can be associated with copper deficient soils.

Ergot, a fungal disease that infects many grasses including cereals, is easily recognized by the hard black kernel-like structures that replace the seed in the plant head. These ergot structures are extremely toxic to humans and livestock and result in lower grain grades. Copper is one of the 13 essential nutrients for plant growth.

"Wheat and barley growing normally with adequate soil copper levels shouldn't become ergot infested," says team member Ieuan Evans, plant pathology supervisor with the crop protection branch. "So, if either of these cereals show ergot infection, producers should suspect a copper deficiency in their soils." Evans says sandy and light loam soils are most likely to be copper deficient and cause susceptibility to ergot.

Susceptibility to ergot infection occurs during pollination. Copper deficiency can result in some degree of pollen sterility in wheat and barley. "This causes the grain flowers to open so the stigmas (female parts) can receive fertile pollen. The open flowers expose the stigmas to infection by ergot spores," says Evans. "The infected flowers then develop into ergots rather than normal grain."

Rye, on the other hand, is a cross pollinated grain and its flowers normally open. Consequently, it's always susceptible to ergot infection, he says.

Ergot on copper deficient soils will generally show up along the headlands since wild grasses are usually the source of the poisonous fungus. "Growers should check standing crop and harvested grain for the hard black grain-sized structures," says Evans.

(Cont'd)

"If you have ergot, it may be a good idea to harvest the outside of the field separate from the rest, as this area most likely will have the highest ergot contamination. Be aware the cereal grading system includes tolerances for ergot."

Preventative measures against ergot include: seeding the field to a non-host crop the next year as ergot rarely survives more than a year in the soil; using ergot free seed or a resistant variety; and, mowing headland grasses on a regular basis to prevent ergot production. If the soil is deficient in copper, application of a copper fertilizer will increase yield and reduce ergot levels, he says.

Evans, on behalf of the four-member research team of Doug Penney, Rick Sherstabetoff and Elston Solberg, presented their research findings to the 1990 Joint Annual Meeting of the Canadian and American Phyopathological Societies in August.

30

Contact: Ieuan Evans
427-7098

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Plan accessible farm office

A young Alberta farm family in the Veteran area had a common farm office problem: their laundry, sewing and office space were all in the same room.

Cramped and inconvenient, their farm office wasn't working for them. So, they approached their local Alberta Agriculture district home economist for help. Working with her and department housing specialists, a solution was suggested and the couple built an office space off their kitchen.

"They've had their office addition for a year," says Kerry Schwing, Coronation district home economist. "They've found their office location is handy for communication between spouses and a great place to do books while dovetailing kitchen duties. The addition has met all of their needs and more--they don't know why they didn't do it sooner."

A central main floor farm office is something more farm families are planning to meet farm business and other family needs says Donna Bagdan, Alberta Agriculture housing specialist in Edmonton. "A well designed office helps you manage better, whether your farm office is just for your farm's record keeping or it does additional duty for a secondary home based business and or as a place for children to do their homework."

So, office planning starts with who will use the office and what they'll use it for, she says. Additional users, space for meetings, and room for a computer, filing cabinets and shelving are among considerations when planning the size and physical layout of the room.

"If there is a second business, maybe you'll need a second desk. If your children will do homework there, think about other surface work area. What about wall shelving and a storage area for your reference material? Do you want an armchair for visiting salesmen or clients? You really need to think out your use," she says.

(Cont'd)

Location is the next consideration. "Accessibility has become a main concern and people have moved their offices into the core of the house, not hidden them in their basements," says Bagdan. Being close to an outside entrance is important. So may be having a view of the farm yard from the office window. Proximity to the kitchen can add to communication ease and family togetherness.

Lighting, furnishing and arranging a farm office also require special attention to keep it both comfortable and functional, she says. "This includes getting good natural light from a window, remembering to put a telephone in the office and buying a good chair for your desk."

Alberta Agriculture will soon have a new factsheet available to help people with remodeling or building their farm office. As well, farm families with questions and concerns about their farm office design, can contact their local district office or housing specialist in Edmonton for assistance.

30

Contact: Donna Bagdan
427-2181

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Workshops help farm home planning

A series of nine two-day workshops across the province can help farm families building a new home or remodeling their current house.

"Whether you're planning a new home, an addition or a small home improvement, this workshop could be a big help," says Donna Bagdan, Alberta Agriculture housing specialist with the engineering services branch.

Bagdan, along with engineering branch colleague George Cassady and Jeff Bradshaw of Alberta Energy, present the two-day program. Their easy to understand, practical and useful information includes: farm home design trends; selection of exterior finishing materials; windows and doors; heating and ventilating systems; insulation and airtightness; and, foundations.

Kitchens, lighting, working drawings, contracts and costs are also on each workshop's agenda.

The specialists will also review participants' housing projects. Consultation time will be available both days of the two-part workshop, says Bagdan.

"By preregistering, participants receive a valuable preplanning kit that helps them get their project down on paper. They'll also be better prepared for the workshop," she says.

Housing publications on a variety of subjects will also be available at the workshop.

Workshops have been scheduled for: Wrentham, October 30 and November 13; Brooks, October 31 and November 14; Fort Macleod, November 1 and 15; Wainwright, November 6 and 27; Grande Prairie, November 20 and December 4; Genesse Hall, January 17 and 31; Lacombe, November 22 and December 6; Torrington, January 22 and February 5; and, Daysland, January 23 and February 6. For more information on the workshops, contact local Alberta Agriculture district offices.

30

Contact: Donna Bagdan
427-2181

George Cassady
427-2181

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Conservation project direct seeds winter wheat

A soil conservation project in the Municipal District of Pincher Creek will demonstrate soil and moisture conservation through a minimum till winter wheat project.

With assistance from the Canada\Alberta agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) program, the municipality's agricultural service board (ASB) project compares two different seeding dates in early and late September and zero-till versus conventional till seeding of Norstar winter wheat.

"The most important thing in the demonstration is the difference between winter wheat seeded directly into standing stubble compared to stubble worked prior to seeding," says Rob Dunn, regional soil conservation co-ordinator in Lethbridge.

Direct seeding accomplishes two things, he says. The soil surface is protected from the erosive southern Alberta winds and the improved snow catch reduces the risk of crop winter kill by creating a thermal blanket of snow during the extreme cold.

"Improved snow catch can also increase soil moisture reserves which increases potential crop yield," he adds.

In the zero till plot, winter wheat will be seeded directly into standing stubble that has been sprayed with Roundup for weed control. Tillage will be used for weed control and seedbed preparation on the conventional tillage plot. Plots will be monitored for winter wheat stand establishment, wind erosion, yields and soil moisture.

The project is located on the ASB's conservation demonstration farm north of Cowley. The farm is used to demonstrate farming practices that will help conserve soil and moisture in the municipality.

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

30

Contact: Rob Dunn
381-5130

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Try fall seeding for earlier veggie crop

Vegetable gardeners who want an earlier crop can try fall seeding says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Fall seeding is a way to get a head start on the growing season," says Pam North, information officer at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton. "For example, lettuce can be ready by late June, carrots in early July and onions and garlic mature three weeks earlier than if seeded in the spring."

Not all vegetables are suitable for fall seeding she cautions. Cool season crops are the best. They include onions, carrots, parsnips, spinach, lettuce and garlic.

Timing is also critical to fall seeding. "If the seed is planted too early, it will take up water and be killed when the water freezes, so you want to seed just before the ground freezes and into dry soil. That's usually in late October or early November," North says.

North says a light soil with lots of organic matter works best when fall seeding. "A heavy clay soil will form a crust which may prevent seedlings from germinating in the spring."

She also advises choosing a spot in the garden that won't be in the way of spring activity. The area should be sheltered to avoid wind blowing seeds and soil away.

The same kind of soil preparation goes on when fall seeding as when planting a garden in the spring. Soil must be worked and large lumps broken up to make a fine seedbed, then levelled.

Finally, seeding is the same as in the spring. "Sow the seed at the same depth as you normally would in the spring, only sow more thickly because often about 10 per cent of the seeds don't germinate."

For more information on fall seeding, contact North at 422-1789.

30

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Disaster assistance available for flooded farmers

Farmers in western areas of the province who suffered flood damage between the end of May and beginning of July are eligible for disaster assistance.

Ken Kowalski, minister responsible for Alberta Public Safety Services, announced an agricultural component of assistance for farmers in designated areas. In addition to assistance for eligible residential damage, farmers can also apply for assistance where flooding caused: property damage to farm buildings and fences; loss or damage of farm supplies including stored grain; and, repair of essential farm driveways, roadways, bridges and culverts. Payments for this damage are subject to a $1,000 deductible and the balance is cost-shared with the government paying 80 per cent.

Debris clean-up, repair of septic tanks, and repair of extraordinary erosion damage to cultivated land, dugouts and dams aren't subject to the deductible and will be paid at 100 per cent of the appraised cost. Maximum total assistance will be $100,000 to any individual.

The agricultural component of the disaster assistance program doesn't include loss of livestock, loss or damage to farm machinery and vehicles, loss of recreational items including boats, stored building materials and all crop losses including hay.

Where crop loss has caused financial hardship, nine per cent loans with the first two years interest free will be available through the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation. In cases where farmers have suffered back-to-back losses in 1989 and 1990, interest payments will be exempted for up to five years.

Designated areas of the program include: Improvement Districts 20, 19, 17 (Heart River Basin), 16 and 5; Municipal Districts of Spirit River, Smoky River (west of Highway 2), Brazeau, Clearwater, Rocky View (west of Highway 2), Bighorn, and Foothills (west of Highway 2); and, the Counties of Grande Prairie, Red Deer (west of Highway 2), Mountain View (west of Highway 2), Lacombe, Ponoka, Wetaskiwin, Leduc and Parkland (south of Highway 627 and west of Highway 60).

(Cont'd)

Detailed announcements about the whole program will be made in local newspapers in the areas designated for assistance. Locations for registration will be announced as soon as final arrangements with the municipalities have been completed.

Anyone who needs immediate information should contact Alberta Public Safety Services at 422-9000.

Starting in late May and continuing for the next six weeks, large areas of western Alberta had extraordinarily heavy rains. In some cases there was as much as six to seven inches in a 24-hour period. A disaster assistance program for residential and business losses was announced on July 10.

30

Contact: Grahame Blundell
451-7111

EDITOR'S NOTE: BECAUSE OF AGRI-NEWS' EARLY PRESS TIME, REGISTRATION LOCATIONS AND TIMES MAY HAVE BEEN SET. PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL MUNICIPAL OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION.

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Federal-provincial agriculture ministers talk trade, policy review

International trade issues and the current review of national agri-food policy dominated the recent meeting of federal and provincial agriculture ministers in Moncton.

"We had a very busy and productive meeting, particularly from the Alberta perspective," says Shirley McClellan, Associate Agriculture Minister, speaking on behalf of herself and Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley who is currently on a Latin American trade mission. "Trade discussions are important, especially as we head toward the final months of the current GATT round of negotiations, scheduled for completion this December."

At the conference, Alberta tabled a report on provincial input in trade negotiations. McClellan says the paper suggested additional ways provincial perspectives and analyses could be included in Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN). "Our concern is full and effective participation and the best way to achieve that goal," she says. "I'm confident the federal government is clear about our resolve to be included and will see our request is effectively accommodated."

The ministers also agreed in principle on a mechanism to speed up removal of technical barriers to interprovincial trade. A memorandum of understanding outlining the mechanism was signed by the Alberta ministers.

Going into the conference, McClellan says Isley and she were seeking progress in two key areas, transportation and farm income stabilization. Action is being taken on both these issues, she says.

The ministers established a federal-provincial committee to examine payment options for the Western Grain Transportation Act and Feed Freight Assistance, recognizing regional and provincial needs as well as grain handling and transportation efficiency. The committee will prepare a framework paper for a November 1990 meeting of all agriculture ministers.

(Cont'd)

Federal-provincial agriculture ministers talk trade, policy review (cont'd)

In November, the ministers will also look at safety nets more closely. "There are number of issues for consideration. As a group, we are very interested in the production neutrality of the suggested Gross Revenue Insurance Plan (GRIP) and a Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA). Options, especially those related to government and farmer financial obligations, will need to fleshed out before decisions are made," she says.

Reviews of the work by 11 task forces examining agri-food policy were a major portion of the conference agenda. The ministers acknowledged the substantial progress to date and expressed appreciation for the work done by more than 200 people in private and public sectors involved in the task forces.

Among the highlights of their review was an endorsement of a plan for environmental sustainability and of recommendations to enhance market responsiveness and competitiveness in the agri-food industry.

"I was also very pleased with a report tabled by a federal-provincial committee on rural community development. I believe it's complementary to a program already underway in our province, Local Development Initiatives, introduced by Ray Speaker, Minister of Municipal Affairs.

"We, in rural Alberta, know the impact of decisions made from the provincial to international level on our communities. The committee's report encouraged maintaining and enhancing the strength of rural communities, a strength which I believe is important to our nation as a whole," says McClellan.

30

Contact: Louise Riopel
422-9156

Barry Mehr
427-2442

September 10, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

ALBERTA FARM WOMAN OF THE YEAR

The Alberta Farm Women's Network is looking for nominations for their annual woman of the year award. Award considerations are contributions to community though leadership in organizations and dedication to the farming community. The award will also recognize contributions and dedication to family and farm. Nomination forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district home economists. The deadline is November 30. The award will be presented at the third provincial Alberta Farm Women's conference in Calgary January 30 to 31. For more information, contact Donna Graham in Vulcan at 485-6384.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS BEEF SYMPOSIUM

The fourth "Strategies for Success" symposium organized by the Beef Information Centre will be in Toronto October 18 and 19. Topics on the agenda are: past, present and future beef demand; consumer needs in the '90s; meeting the demand for convenience; foodservice needs in the '90s; meeting demand for quality; and, eating greener. For more information, contact the Beef Information Centre in Toronto at (416)766-6146.

NOMINATION CALL FOR 1991 SOIL CONSERVATION AWARDS

The Alberta Conservation Tillage Society and the Western Producer are calling for nominations for the 1991 Soil Conservation Awards. Some changes have been made to the awards program. The individual award name has been changed to the Conservation Farm Family Award to better reflect conservation farming as a family affair. The award recognizes outstanding achievement in soil conservation by an Alberta family. Nominations for the award can now be made through local municipalities. Nominations will be forwarded by the municipality to one of six soil conservation advisory committees to choose six regional winners as award

(Cont'd)

NOMINATION CALL FOR 1991 SOIL CONSERVATION AWARDS (cont'd)

finalists. Judging criteria include: evidence of a long term plan; scope of the plan; appropriateness of conservation methods; economic and practical benefits; innovation; leadership; community involvement; and, participation in conservation organizations. Nominations for the Group Conservation Award are made directly to ACTS. The purpose of the award is to recognize outstanding support for soil conservation by an Alberta group. These groups may include community, agricultural society and local organizations. Province-wide groups are not eligible. Judging criteria include long term planning and activity success through impact on the community and adoption of conservation methods. The nomination deadline is October 1, 1990. Nomination forms are available from municipal fieldmen and Alberta Agriculture district offices. Both awards will be presented at the ACTS annual meeting in January 1991. Winners are expected to make a brief presentation explaining their conservation program to the soil conservation workshop at the ACTS annual meeting. For more information, contact Russ Evans, ACTS, Box 1, Site 9, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2G6 or call 936-5306.

HUNTER JUMPING RIDING SCHOOL AT OLDS COLLEGE

National equestrian team member Gail Ross will instruct a hunter jumper riding school at Olds College September 21 through 23. The clinic is open to all interested persons with their own horses. The school will cover basic problems in riding and training at beginner and advanced levels. Students will be divided into small working groups with similar interests and abilities. For more information, contact Olds College extension services at 556-8344.

AGRI-NEWS

September 17, 1990

For immediate release

This Week

Shoemaker promoting Alberta oats.....1

Management now to prevent spring scours.....3

Asia Pacific buyers at special Alberta food display.....5

Early harvest weather good.....7

Alberta Agriculture appointments.....9

Briefs.....11

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 17, 1990
For immediate release

Shoemaker promoting Alberta oats

One of the world's greatest all time jockeys has been enlisted to promote Alberta oats.

Bill Shoemaker signed a contract this summer with the Oat Producers Association of Alberta. In return for endorsing and promoting Alberta oats wherever he races, Shoemaker will be supplied with Alberta oats for a year.

Association secretary-treasurer Shirley Cripps says having the high profile and highly respected Shoemaker promote the Alberta product is a tremendous marketing opportunity, especially in California where Shoemaker is based. California is second only to Texas in its total horse population. It's also a tough and competitive market to break into.

"Any opportunity we can give to Alberta oat producers by exposing their product, is important in expanding our oat market," she says. And it doesn't hurt, she adds, that Shoemaker says "Alberta oats are the finest oats he's ever used".

Shoemaker was a jockey for 40 years winning more money than any other rider in racing history. Based in the Los Angeles area, he currently trains and runs a string of 30 horses and says Alberta oats are a good product. "They're probably the best oats I've seen from anywhere," he said from Del Mar racetrack near San Diego in southern California.

Bill Shoemaker (left) and Shirley Cripps (right) at his California stables.

(Cont'd)

Shoemaker says he's talked with many of his racing fraternity about Alberta oats since signing the promotion contract in June. All of them have been impressed, he adds.

Sales are the ultimate goal of the promotion. The generic promotion of the Alberta oat product is a building block in establishing markets and assuring potential customers of both high quality and reliable supply, says Alberta Agriculture trade director Elton Dunk.

"The original idea for getting Willie Shoemaker involved in a promotion came from a private company. It was instrumental in the initial contact and getting the program on the road. The association's promotion will help not only this company but all companies who market Alberta oats," says Dunk.

Dunk says the racehorse community is already aware of Alberta oats. Consecutive Kentucky Derby winners Sunday Silence, Winning Colors and Alysheba were all fueled by Alberta oats. "This particular promotion reinforces that awareness within the California target market, and will lead to additional exposure at major tracks in other regions."

Marketing and market development of Alberta oats are two of the four main objectives of the provincial oat association formed in June 1989. It's also concerned with production and research.

High and consistent quality are the primary attraction of Alberta oats. Alberta oats tend to have higher bushel weights than those from northern American states. This makes them a higher energy feed which is particularly attractive to the performance horse industry.

Alberta is one of the premier oat growing regions in the world. The province's farmers account for just over half of Canadian production.

30

Contact: Shirley Cripps
682-3758

Elton Dunk
427-4241

September 17, 1990
For immediate release

Management now to prevent spring scours

Calf scours is a disease of management, so now is the time for preventative action before calves are born in the spring says the head of Alberta Agriculture's health management branch.

"Scours can't be successfully controlled by only using vaccines and drugs. Proper facilities are needed in order to apply management techniques that prevent a scours outbreak. So, if you have to change your approach, you'll need time to plan and then construct. Remember posts and water lines may only be put into the ground before freeze up," says Ralph Shute.

Anything that causes a weak calf automatically predisposes the calf to scours. Filth in the calving area adds to the chance calves will contract the disease. So, management starts with cleanliness and well fed cows, he says. "Healthy, well fed, clean cows usually produce calves which will be the same."

Feeding cows an adequate and balanced ration is the most important element in producing a lively, healthy calf. "Inadequate cow nutrition can be compared to making a brick building using mud instead of mortar to hold the bricks together. You get a building that looks okay, but the first rain or stress causes the walls to crumble.

"It's the same for a cow and calf. A poorly nourished cow will produce a normal looking calf, but it will likely succumb to disease from the normal stress of life," says Shute. Consult an Alberta Agriculture regional livestock or local veterinarian for more information on nutrition requirements, he adds.

He advises producers to consider feeding cows and heifers separately to make sure heifers obtain maximum growth and can provide optimal nutrition for their calves. "This may require construction or modification of feeders, fences, water lines and shelters," Shute says.

(Cont'd)

Management now to prevent spring scours (cont'd)

Winter feeding areas should be well separated from the calving area. This allows a clean calving area, free of manure accumulation. As well, the cows' living area should be in a high, well drained location. "If you don't have those kinds of areas, it's wise to construct drainage ditches or plateaus to assure a muck-free environment," says Shute.

Clean cows are of equal importance, he says. "A new born calf searching for a teat and finding nothing but balls of manure clinging to the cow's flank is an immediate candidate for scours."

Last year's feeding and calving areas should be cleaned out and left to dry in "good old Alberta sunshine", he adds. "Nothing goes further in sanitizing a barnyard or shelter than a thorough drying."

As well, portable feeders should be continually moved to new, dry locations. Also plan to put up and use lots of bedding. "It's a really cheap 'medicine' in preventing scours," Shute says.

He also advises enough shelters to allow cows and calves to cope with the rigors of Alberta's winter and spring months. A dry shelter, out of the wind, with lots of bedding saves many calves from an untimely death.

A clean convenient water source for calves is also important. "Water, low to the ground and free of ice, keeps calves from drinking barnyard puddles. A creep watering area prevents cows from soiling the water source," he says.

Another plan-ahead strategy to help calves is a colostrum bank. "Collect some from a neighbouring dairy and keep it in the freezer. It's a life saver when some late night a heifer won't accept her new calf and it's weak.

"Thaw and feed with a tube or bottle within the first hour after birth. Then, the calf is well set to resist disease and will have enough energy to persist in keeping after the heifer," Shute says.

30

Contact: Ralph Shute
436-9343

September 17, 1990
For immediate release

Asia Pacific buyers at special Alberta food display

A table top display of Alberta processed food products gave buyers from Japan, Hong Kong and New Zealand an opportunity to see and taste Alberta made products.

The buyers, in transit from an international food trade show in Vancouver, stopped in Edmonton to see a special one-day display of a wide range of Alberta food products, says David Wong, Alberta Agriculture senior trade director for the Asia Pacific market.

"We invited a number of Alberta companies to take part in a co-operative effort with the department's marketing services division and market development division," he says. Marketing services works with the provincial industry, while market development seeks out opportunites both within and beyond Alberta's borders.

Wong says the Asia Pacific market is of growing importance to Alberta food exporters. While the United States is still the leading destination of Alberta agriculture and food products, second place Japan's export total isn't far behind. In 1989, U.S. exports were $609 million, and Japan's $528 million out of Alberta's total $2.08 billion agricultural and food trade.

"As Japan's food import regulations become more liberalized, there are even greater opportunities for Alberta processors. Niche markets for western-style foods are also opening up. Events like the table top display, help promote our products," he says.

But more important than promotion, face-to-face meetings between buyers and processors bridge information gaps about packaging and quality. "Each side learns," says Ron Pettitt, manager of the processed food development sector in the marketing services divison. "The foreign buyers get a better grasp of Alberta quality, while our processors get a better understanding of packaging and quality needs. They also acquire a better insight into how business is done in foreign countries."

(Cont'd)

Packaging is a particular concern. Quantities, size differences and preferences are important considerations in new markets. But, a recent problem with a product also showed differences in climate have to be considered.

"The Japanese are big on Alberta beef jerky. Buyers were enthusiastic about our product, and bought and shipped it. But high humidity caused some mold problems. However, with assistance from the Food Processing and Development Test Centre in Leduc, the packaging problem was solved," says Wong. The example not only illustrates a potential problem, but also the tools available from Alberta Agriculture to help food processors' efforts in new markets, he adds.

Other buyers in attendance at the table top display were from Hong Kong and New Zealand. Neither are major markets, both with relatively small populations. But their interest is solid, Wong says.

"Hong Kong imports over 90 per cent of its food. There's a lot of adoption of western foods and the need to feed its hordes of western tourists. The retail buyers we had here wanted to find reliable sources for their food service industry.

"The New Zealand group is particularly interested in bacon and canola oil, and we'll be continuing trade development work through the Canadian High Commission there."

30

Contact: David Wong
427-4241

Ron Pettitt
427-7325

September 17, 1990
For immediate release

Early harvest weather good

A warm dry August provided good harvest conditions for most parts of Alberta says Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

"Unfortunately, hot dry weather was the last thing farmers in east central Alberta wanted. Dry conditions there during August diminished crop prospects and reduced range and pasture productivity." says Peter Dzikowski, of the conservation and development branch in Edmonton.

Temperatures were one to two degrees Celsius above normal during August. The first half of the month was really warm, the last half was generally cool with frost in many parts of central Alberta. Fortunately, temperatures dipped just to freezing or slightly below causing only isolated minor damage, he says.

August rainfall was generally below normal in most of southern Alberta with typical values of 15 to 30 mm of precipitation, about 30 to 60 per cent of normal. Central areas reported 40 to 70 mm of rain. Rain fall was highly variable in the Peace region with amounts between 12 to 64 mm reported.

The lowest rainfall total for the month was 12.2 mm at the Peace River Airport, 24 per cent of the normal monthly total. The highest total reported was 80.2 mm at Vegreville, 108 per cent of normal. Also of note, Elnora reported 80 mm of rain during August, 140 per cent of the August normal for the community south east of Red Deer.

Dzikowski says the 1990 growing season has on average been close to normal. Overall May 1 to August 31 precipitation was 248 mm, a single percentage point above the normal average of 244.5 mm. The total is an average for 49 Alberta weather stations.

The average temperature for the same four month period was 14.5 degrees Celsius which is 0.4 degrees warmer than the normal.

(Cont'd)

"These overall averages are interesting, but they hide the facts of July flooding from heavy rainfall in west central Alberta and quite dry conditions through the end of the summer in eastern Alberta," he says.

Seasonal precipitation totals varied from a low of 139.7 mm at Bow Island--83 per cent of its normal--to a high of 417.2 mm at Red Deer, 151 per cent of its long term normal. Peace River's 147.8 mm total was second driest in the province and was 71 per cent of its long term average.

"When you consider overall averages, it was a near 'normal' season this year. But, not many places had normal weather over the crop year," says Dzikowski.

30

Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

September 17, 1990
For immediate release

Alberta Agriculture Appointments

NEW BRANCH HEAD AT LEDUC FOOD PROCESSING DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Robert Myhara is the new branch head of Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc. Myhara has 15 years experience in the food industry. He has worked for Canada Packers, the Marine Institute of Newfoundland and Labrador and most recently as a food industry consultant in Toronto. "While a consultant, my work involved process and product development, food safety and quality, food microbiology, packaging materials evaluation, quality control program development and guidance on regulatory affairs," he says. Myhara holds MSc (University of Manitoba) and PhD (University of British Columbia) degrees in food science. His appointment was announced by Dennis Glover, director of the marketing services division. "Dr. Myhara's background and experience will be a major benefit to Alberta's food processing industry as we tackle the concerns of food safety, environmental impact, new product development and the challenges of marketing our products in an increasingly competitive world marketplace. Myhara can be reached in Leduc at 986-4793.

NEW DISTRICT AGRICULTURIST IN HANNA

Hanna's new district agriculturist is John Erdman. Erdman joins Alberta Agriculture from a family farming operation at Barons. He had been involved in the farm since 1984. Before that time, he completed Alberta Green Certificate programs in dryland crops (level three), beef (level two) and sheep (level one). He was also involved with the Dryland Salinity Association, serving on its technical committee. He is a 1977 BSc in animal science graduate of the University of Guelph. As district agriculturist, he will provide information and educational programs to producers, farm organizations and agribusiness. "I'm looking forward to getting to know and working with the farm community in the Hanna area," he says. He can be contacted in Hanna at 854-5500.

(Cont'd)

NEW DISTRICT AGRICULTURIST IN SPIRIT RIVER

Cathie Erichsen has joined Alberta Agriculture as the Spirit River district agriculturist. She already had experience working with Peace River region farmers after spending the summer of 1989 as an assistant district agriculturist in Valleyview. A 1989 graduate of the University of Alberta with a BSc in agriculture, Erichsen spent last winter as the regional 4-H assistant in Stettler. As district agriculturist, she will assist farmers with production and management information and educational programs. "I'm enjoying working with farmers, their organizations and agribusiness in the Spirit River area," she says. Erichsen can be reached in Spirit River at 864-3597.

CATHIE ERICHSEN

September 17, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

ALBERTA 4-H ALUMNUS ON SOVIET TRIP

Greg Deitz, of Vulcan, was the Canadian 4-H Council representative in a seven-member Canadian delegation visit to the Soviet Union. The Canadians were invited by CYO-Komsomol, a committee of youth organizations in the USSR, on an exposure tour and planning mission for a Canada-USSR conference on youth, family and society. The delegation arrived in Moscow on September 1 and returned to Canada September 10. They also spent three days in Ashkhabad at a conference with the theme: "mankind, the family, society: problems and solutions". Tours of the cities, historic sites, schools and youth groups were on the agenda, as well as round table discussions and working group meetings. Deitz has been a 4-H club member, worked as staff and sponsored 4-H activities as well as working with other youth programs in Alberta and Saskatchewan. In addition to his extensive 4-H involvement, he has participated in the Manitoba Rural Youth Forum, the Ontario Junior Farmers annual meeting and the World Congress of Rural Youth in New Zealand. He is currently the owner/operator of his own small business enterprise in Vulcan. The United Farmers of Alberta and the Alberta Wheat Pool were corporate sponsors of Deitz's trip. For more information, contact Malhon Weir at the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 427-2541 or Deitz in Vulcan at 485-6393.

IMPROVE SWINE EFFICIENCY BY VIDEO

If you're interested in improving the efficiency of your swine operation, Alberta Agriculture's Film Library now has a number of excerpts from a telecourse available on video. The telecourse was produced by Purdue University in conjunction with Kansas State University. The segement topics are: pre-weaning mortality (440-2-1); feed efficieny (440-2-2); three-phase feeding programs (440-2-3); alternative feed stuffs (440-2-4); feed grinding (440-2-5); managing

(Cont'd)

IMPROVE SWINE EFFICIENCY BY VIDEO (cont'd)

swine environment (440-2-6); space allowances (440-2-7); and, Henry Ltd, a farrow-to-finish operation (440-2-8). Each excerpt is available on its own cassette. They may be borrowed by writing the Alberta Agriculture Film Library, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. There is no cost for borrowing, but out-of-province borrowers must pay courier charges.

AUTUMN PINE NEEDLE SHED NORMAL

Yellow and brown needles in the late summer and fall aren't necessarily a sign of a diseased pine tree. Most often this is the natural shedding of needles, says Pam North, information officer at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton. Most pines keep their needles for three to four years. Eventually they turn color, yellow or brown, and fall off the tree. Those needles aren't replaced, but trees get new growth on branch ends in the spring. If trees are under stress from drought, poor soil fertility, transplant shock or pesticide damage, they will shed more needles. Consult a horticulturist or district agriculturist, if you're not sure what is causing the needle shed. Pines aren't the only evergreens that shed their needles. Spruce trees shed six to seven-year-old needles. Because spruce are more dense than pines, the browning isn't as noticeable. Needle shed is also very noticeable in cedars. For more information, contact the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton at 422-1789.

AGRI-NEWS

September 24, 1990

For immediate release

This Week

Isley's trade mission to Latin America successful.....1

Calf hide market has diversification potential.....3

Preg checking improves herd efficiency.....6

1990 4-H scholarships awarded.....8

Old and new ways to battle frost.....12

Water part of fall lawn care.....14

Briefs.....15

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 24, 1990
For immediate release

Isley's trade mission to Latin America successful

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley has returned from a two-week trade mission to Latin America. The mission, August 25 to September 11, involved meetings in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Mexico.

"Our goals on this trade mission were to further open the lines of communication between Alberta and key trading partners in Latin America, to discuss issues of great importance to our agriculture industry, such as the progress of the ongoing Multilateral Trade Negotiations, and to pursue increased sales of our province's livestock genetics and technology, which are among the very best in the world. I'm pleased to report that we made important advances in each of these areas on this mission," says the minister.

During the mission, Isley met with the Ministers of Agriculture of all four countries he visited. "In discussions with my counterparts in Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina and Mexico, we worked toward a consensus on the need to eliminate agricultural export subsidies during the current round of GATT talks. We also discussed a number of joint projects to promote trade in agricultural products," he says.

In both Brazil and Mexico, special promotions were conducted to showcase Alberta livestock and livestock genetics. "I was very pleased with the turn out we had at these promotional events," says Isley, "and was left with no doubt whatsoever that we'll see increased sales of Alberta breeding stock and genetics as a result of our activities."

The minister noted that, following his return from Latin America, he asked the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) to look into the possibilities for development of export financing initiatives. "I'd like to find an effective way to encourage Alberta's agricultural export companies to open up new markets, not just in Latin America, but around the world," he says. "I am confident that ADC's expertise in agri-business development can be put to very profitable use in this area."

(Cont'd)

Isley's trade mission to Latin America successful (cont'd)

"Alberta's agriculture and food industry has earned an excellent name in the countries of Latin America," the minister says. "Through ministerial trade missions such as this one, and through the ongoing market development efforts of Alberta Agriculture staff, we can build on our reputation to generate sales and trade dollars for Alberta agri-businesses."

30

Contact: Arnold de Leeuw
427-4241

Doug Bienert
427-4241

September 24, 1990
For immediate release

Calf hide market has diversification potential

Demand for high quality leather has sparked a potential line of diversification for Alberta cattlemen.

Last year, Hermes, an international Paris fashion house specializing in leather merchandise, purchased 225 calf hides from Alberta as a pilot project. Another 500 calves are expected to be sold this year with a potential for market expansion into the tens of thousands.

"Hermes is enthusiastic about the quality of our Alberta product, as it's superior to hides procured from their traditional sources. Based on what they've experienced so far, they intend to expand their buying in our province," says Shirley McClellan, Alberta's Associate Agriculture Minister. While on a recent trade mission, she met with company representatives in Paris.

Throughout the past year, Hermes buyer Valentin Bercovici-Plopul has made presentations to Alberta cattlemen and met with individual producers detailing company requirements. Once Montreal-based, Bercovici-Plopul and the Canadian research division have recently moved to Edmonton.

Hermes is looking for hides from healthy Simmental or Simmental-Hereford cross calves only, he says. Hides must be blemish free with no marking from brands, injections or other external cuts or scratches. Castration and dehorning aren't required.

Calves, born in late February to March, are marketed in mid May to late July at 300 to 330 pounds. Autumn-born calves sold at the same weight are also part of the buying program, says Bercovici-Plopul.

Rob Hand and Bob Winchell, respectively Alberta Agriculture regional livestock specialist and farm economist in Barrhead, did a comparison of producer returns from traditional beef marketing to this hide market. They found producers would get about $50 over the market value of a 575 pound steer by selling a calf for its hide.

(Cont'd)

Calf hide market has diversification potential (cont'd)

While that return for a younger calf looks promising, they caution producers to consider all the factors involved in raising calves for a hide market. "Selling your calves for this hide market is a real opportunity, but we suggest before making a decision that producers weigh all the advantages and disadvantages based on their own operation," says Winchell.

Herd size is a consideration. Bercovici-Plopul buys around 30 to 50 calves in a first time contract. Ultimately, he's looking for producers who can market between 150 and 750 calves annually. Hermes offers one year trial contracts with individual producers but has indicated it would like to sign three to five year contracts to guarantee long term supplies.

"I tell producers I won't make them millionaires, but they won't have to worry about paying their bills," Bercovici-Plopul says of the long term contracts. He adds Hermes has steady contracts with European sources stretching back nearly a century.

Facilities might be the most limiting factor for producers, says Hand. "Acceptable hides for this speciality market need to be free of blemishes caused by external injury, so calves have to be enclosed where there is no barb wire. All smooth wire, wood or electricified fencing is okay.

"Sheltered areas have to be free of protruding nails and anything else that could cause bruising and scratches, even brush and trees. As well, calves have to be transported in a smooth walled truck or trailer. Producers might have to make some investment on facilities and weigh that cost against eventual returns."

Bercovici-Plopul says the initial contract with producers recognizes the investment and any changes in management techniques producers might have to make to create the best environment for flawless hides, so producers are paid a premium for their first lot of hides.

(Cont'd)

Producers do have some risks as not all calves will meet hide specifications, says Hand. There are three levels of hide quality, judged once the hides have been totally processed in Europe. At the top is spotless for which the producer would receive full price. If the hide is partly useable, they receive a price based on the percentage of useable hide. If a hide is totally blemished, the producer gets the meat value minus the cost of processing. Producers receive a partial payment when an order is placed, another payment when calves are delivered, and then the final payment once the hide is totally processed.

Each hide is numbered with a producer code and identified from its initial processing at the Innisfail Lambco plant until it becomes leather.

30

Contact: Rob Hand
674-8248

Bob Winchell
674-8256

Valentin Bercovici-Plopul
429-1495

September 24, 1990
For immediate release

Preg checking improves herd efficiency

Early and reliable pregnancy checking is an important management tool for any beef cow/calf operation says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"It's a question of economics and efficiency," says Cornelia Kreplin, a veterinarian with the animal health division. "When you consider it costs about $200 to $250 to feed an open cow over the winter, it makes good economic sense to spend the $1 to $3 per cow it costs for your veterinarian to check your females."

Pregnancy checks allow producers to make herd management decisions such as culling the open cow or moving it to a fall calving program. Herd problems such as infertility, repeat breeding or infectious venereal diseases can be recognized at an earlier stage with well-timed pregnancy checks, she adds.

"These advantages make it surprising more producers don't take advantage of this management tool," she says. A recent survey by the department's animal industry division found less than 30 per cent of Alberta cattle producers pregnancy check.

There are a number of ways to pregnancy check. These include observing cows for return to heat, examining the reproductive tract through the rectum, analysis of blood or milk for high levels of the hormone progesterone, using probes to measure electrical resistance of vaginal mucus and ultrasound examination of the uterus.

"Having the bull do the work, or watching for cows to return to estrus, is probably the most common method used here. Unfortunately, it's also the least accurate," she says. Between five and 10 per cent of cows show behavioral signs of heat for up to 240 days of pregnancy. As well, observing a cow herd is time consuming and is usually needed when haying or harvesting are in progress.

(Cont'd)

Preg checking improves herd efficiency (cont'd)

The fastest, most economical and reliable pregnancy check method available is examination, or palpation, of the reproductive tract through the rectum. Rectal palpation has been used by veterinarians for over 90 years. A positive test is based on detection of several characteristics of a pregnant uterus.

"This method has limitations, but its greatest cash cost is the rectal sleeves needed for the examination. It's safe for the vet and the cow. It can be done quickly and results are available immediately," Kreplin says. Accuracy is generally good, but depends on the operator and his experience, she adds.

Most errors are made if the examination is too early in gestation. Accuracy improves when the bull has been removed from the cows for at least 30 to 35 days. Accuracy is also difficult after 120 days of pregnancy as the uterus will have fallen into the abdominal cavity and be out of reach for anyone making an examination.

One criticism of the practice is that cows sometimes abort following manipulation. Kreplin says some of the spontaneous abortions may be coincidental. They frequently occur before 45 days of gestation as nature's way of eliminating genetic abnormalities. In order to minimize potential abortions, she says, examinations shouldn't include direct palpation of the fetus.

30

Contact: Cornelia Kreplin
436-8901

September 24, 1990
For immediate release

1990 4-H scholarships awarded

Seventy-six past or present 4-H members have been awarded post-secondary scholarships for the 1990-91 academic year.

Students from throughout Alberta benefited from over $51,000 offered in scholarships this year. Nearly 250 applications were received by the 4-H branch. Each one was considered on 4-H and community involvement, leadership skills, school activities and academic standing.

In 1990 three new scholarships were added to the 4-H scholarship program: seven $1000 awards from Alberta Ford & Mercury Dealers; the Wetaskiwin District 4-H Scholarship, three scholarships worth approximately $500 each; and, the Dixon Shield Memorial Scholarship, valued this year at $450 and administered by the 4-H Foundation of Alberta.

4-H scholarships are sponsored by individuals, corporations, associations, the Alberta government and memorial funds.

For more information on the 4-H scholarship program in Alberta, or for information on starting a 4-H scholarship, contact Alberta Agriculture, 4-H Branch, Room 200, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6 or call 422-4444.

30

Contact: Val Runyon
422-4444

(Editor's Note: Following is a complete list of 4-H scholarship winners for 1990-91. News directors and editors please note a detailed package on the winners and scholarships with pictures will be mailed to you by the 4-H branch in the near future. Please contact Val Runyon at 422-4444 for more information.)

1990 4-H SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

SCHOLARSHIP		RECIPIENT	
Alberta Dairymen's Association & Alberta Agriculture	$1000 each	Gail Cunningham	Kelsey
		Marian Johnson	Scandia
		Ginger Langan	Beaverlodge
	$ 500 each	Ingrid Hillert	Barrhead
		Carla Brennan	Forestburg
Alberta Ford & Mercury Dealer Scholarship	$1000 each	Cindy Smigelski	Niton Junction
		Teresa Daw	Kipp
		Christopher Nixon	Grimshaw
		Kelly Tisdale	Red Deer
		Lisa Gagvi	Huxley
		Stacey Parsons	Youngstown
		Valerie Ewanciw	Myrnam
Alberta Treasury Branches	$1000 each	Janice Copland	Lacombe
		Angela Gottenberg	Vulcan
		Tanya Van Tighem	Carstairs
		James Stannard	Sherwood Park
		Stacy Livingstone	Vermilion
		Barbara Gabert	Manning
		Douglas Brown	Byemoor
Alberta Wheat Pool (1st Year)	$ 500 each	David Peltzer	Duchess
(2nd Year)		Douglas Mackay	Waskatenau
		Margo Lawrence	Pine Lake
		Nancy Weiss	Vegreville
Bale Bandits	$1000	Monica Groom	Ponoka
Canadian National Exhibition	$1000	Carla Anderson	Taber
Central Alberta Dairy Pool	$ 500 each	Ella Wright	Didsbury
		Kevin Longeway	Carstairs
Ceres International Women's Fraternity	$ 100	Shelly-Ann Dodgson	Sangudo
Dixon Shield Memorial	$ 450	Valerie Differenz	Bruderheim
Edith Taylor Memorial	$ 400	Keith Gabert	Manning
Farm Credit Corporation	$ 300 each	Mari-Colleen Yost	Chipman
		Liza Reinhardt	Rockyford
		Tammy Shopland	Athabasca
		Kristy Smith	Endiang
		Susan Reinders	Deadwood
		Patricia Mitchell	Pincher Creek
		Annette Cannaday	Rocky Mtn.House

(Cont'd)

1990 4-H scholarship recipients (cont'd)

Farmhouse International Fraternity	$ 100	Darin Nott	Innisfree
4-H Foundation of Alberta	$ 500	Tracy Morev	Mayerthorpe
Hoechst Canada Bursary	$ 500	Cody Jackson	Sundre
Inga Marr Memorial	$ 300	Joanne Neufeld	Gem
Ken Edgerton Memorial	$ 400	Gail Roessler	Sexsmith
Lethbridge & District 4-H Beef Committee	$ 250	Derek Smith	Warner
Lilydale Co-operative	$ 800	Leonard Hendricks	Strathmore
Marilyn Sue Lloyd Memorial	$ 100	Steven Stalker	Carbon
Norma Jean Gray	$1000 each	Carla Bonde Susan Echlin Kimberly Lindeman David MacDougall Jaylyn Ettinger	Rocky Mtn.House Cayley Milk River Champion Czar
Pennington Memorial	$1257.16 each	Sherry Pfannmuller Holly Watson	Mayerthorpe Sangudo
Petro-Canada 4-H Youth Leadership Award	$1000 each	Erin Branson Alana Stelten Bonnie Lyzenga Carrie Gotzke	Markerville Milk River Rosemary Bon Accord
Stanley Shulhan Memorial	$ 200	Marilyn Enders	Barrhead
Thomas Caryk Memorial	$ 500	Alan Hogg	Wembley
TX Bar (1)	$1000	Darlene Donszelmann	Millet
TX Bar (2)	$ 500	Therese Bjoern	Wrentham
TX Bar (3)	$ 400	David Jans	Medicine Hat
United Farmers of Alberta	$ 500 each	Deneen Stoby Christoph Weder	Gun Camrose
United Grain Growers	$ 500	Shelley Vanden Dungen	Vauxhall
Wetaskiwin District 4-H Scholarship	$ 500 each	Kerry Kijewski Tanya Stobbe Troy Stephan	Westerose Millet Wetaskiwin

(Cont'd)

1990 4-H scholarship recipients (cont'd)

Wheat Board Surplus Monies Trust	$ 600 each	Louanna MacLeod	Stavely
		Brian King	Olds
		Loretta Knowles	Byemoor
		Lori Anderson	Bowden
		Catherine McGrath	Vermilion
		Michelle Lemay	Grande Prairie
		Molly Davie	Drayton Valley
Woodgrove Unifarm Local Scholarship	$ 561.92	Travis Visscher	Riviere Qui Barre
World of Beef	$ 250	Darcy Stewart	Strathmore

September 24, 1990
For immediate release

Old and new ways to battle frost

Misting tender crops is a proven way to battle frost injury says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Most frost injury at the growing season's end occurs around sunrise, and the potential threat is for a short time. "Using irrigation water is a practical and inexpensive way of reducing that frost injury. It needs to be properly timed to avoid heavy wetting of soil, but can save tender plants at the end of the growing season," says Belinda Choban, vegetable crop extension specialist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton.

"This makes using the irrigation system feasible because it's a short term protection tool," she adds.

The study of frost and how it forms has opened doors to new methods of frost injury control, she says. These methods are based on knowledge about ice nucleation-active bacteria.

Before ice can form, ice nucleation must occur. Certain bacteria on the plants start this ice forming process. These bacteria live in large numbers on the leaf surfaces of healthy plants. The amount of frost damage increases with the number of ice nucleation-active bacteria on a plant. So, reducing the bacteria population results in a corresponding decrease in frost injury.

Three frost-prevention methods that use this knowledge are application of bactericides, application of antagonistic bacteria and inhibition of bacterial ice nucleation. The first two methods take time to work by either killing the nucleation bacteria or establishing other bacteria in competition with the nucleation-active bacteria. The third method however, acts more quickly and offers virtual day-before frost prevention. It's achieved by chemical and or physical stresses including extreme pHs, heavy metal ions in a soluble solution and some detergents.

(Cont'd)

Old and new ways to battle frost (cont'd)

Through genetic engineering scientists have also produced genetically altered bacteria that can prevent ice nucleation in any of those three ways, Choban adds. However, the technology is still in the developmental stage and isn't readily available.

Another type of frost control is with specific products, such as Frost-Free, No-Frost and Frost-Guard. "Insufficient research has been done for Alberta Agriculture to recommend these products at this time," she says.

Another frost protection option is floating mulches. These polyester materials offer three to four degrees Celsius of frost protection. "Some injury to foliage has been observed where there's direct contact with the floating mulch. But if carefully handled, the floating mulch can be reused, and it isn't an environmental hazard," Choban says.

30

Contact: Belinda Choban
422-1789

Paul Ragan
362-3391

September 24, 1990
For immediate release

Water part of fall lawn care

Preparing your farmstead for winter includes the right care for the lawn says an Alberta Agriculture horticulturist.

"Moisture, whether its from rain or watering, is an important part of getting your lawn ready for the winter," says Pam North, information officer at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton.

Lawns don't need water as frequently as they do in summer. If fall weather is dry, water the lawn occasionally to prevent the roots from drying out.

Water lawns before the ground freezes so there's available moisture for grass roots in the spring. The ground usually freezes toward the end of October or early November, so give the lawn a thorough watering before then, she says.

Nor does she recommend using fertilizer in the fall. "We recommend stopping fertilizer applications by mid-August. This gives the lawn enough time to harden off before winter. Lawns that are actively growing in the fall, may be damaged by an early winter," she says.

If the grass keeps growing, it doesn't hurt to continue mowing. Long grass is susceptible to snow mold. It can also be home to mice that cause considerable damage to lawn and other places around the farm yard.

"But don't cut the grass too short. This exposes the crowns to freezing or desiccation injury, particularly if there isn't enough snow cover," North says. A normal mowing height of four to five centimetres (one and a half to two inches) is best.

30

Contact: Pam North
422-1789

September 24, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

FARM ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE '90S SEMINAR

The Alberta Institute of Agrology is sponsoring a one-day seminar about farm animal welfare in the 1990s October 19 in Edmonton. Among the topics on the agenda are: animal welfare as a social issue; what is animal welfare and how to measure it; issues in the poultry industry; alternative swine housing; Alberta legislation; and, how housing and chronic stress affect the physiology and behavior of animals. A hog, a cattle and a poultry producer will all present their views, as will a Humane Society representative. The seminar will be of interest to livestock producers, agriculture teachers and students, professionals who work with livestock producers, representatives of financial and insurance institutions and designers, manufacturers and distributors of livestock buildings and equipment. The seminar location is Salon 1 of Northlands Agricom. The registration fee is $50 ($25 for students). It includes, lunch and a copy of the proceedings. The registration deadline is October 12. For more information, contact John Chang at 427-2181.

FOOD, PESTICIDE ANALYSIS FOCUS OF NEW AG CANADA FACILITY

A new Agriculture Canada laboratory designed for regulatory and research duties using new technology and state-of-the-art equipment was officially opened in Calgary this month. The $20 million 6,500 square metre lab and office facility will concentrate on food and pesticide analysis. Pesticide analysis will ensure fresh and processed foods are free of pesticide residues caused by environmental contamination or misuse of chemicals. Staff will also analyze pesticides to determine if chemical ingredients are consistent with product labels. In the food laboratory, staff will analyze processed meat, diary, egg, fruit and vegetable products to detect bacteria. They will test for preservative,

(Cont'd)

Agri-News briefs (cont'd)

FOOD, PESTICIDE ANALYSIS FOCUS OF NEW AG CANADA FACILITY (cont'd)
drug and antibiotic residues. Staff will also develop rapid tests for detecting bacteria and other contaminants. For more information on the laboratory and its inspection programs, contact its director Ralph Onciul in Calgary at 289-7021.

OVERWINTERING GERANIUMS

You can save geraniums for next year's flower boxes and beds by digging them up before the first heavy frost. The annual flower can be easily overwintered indoors from one year to the next, says Pam North, horticulturist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre in Edmonton. Once dug up, place the plants quite close together in a box or other container. Cover the roots with a light potting soil or a mixture of peat moss and vermiculite or peat moss and perlite. Cut the plants back quite severely, so only branch stubs remain. Then place them in a cool, dark location at a temperature between four and seven degrees Celsius. Water the soil before storing. During the winter water enough to prevent the plants from shrivelling. Allow the soil to dry out completely between waterings. An alternate method is to shake soil off the roots and hang upside down in a cool dark place. Cutting tops aren't necessary as they will dry off. Bring the plants out of storage in late February and pot them in individual containers in a high quality potting soil. Place in a sunny window, preferably with a southern exposure. If you want to take cuttings off the plants, bring them up in January. For more information, contact North in Edmonton at 422-1789.

AGRI-NEWS

October 1, 1990

For immediate release

This Week

Ministers release Crow Benefit method of payment proposal.....1

Provincial soil conservation workshop in January.....4

Mowing and shredding to manage crop residue.....5

1990 Queen Mother scholarship recipients.....6

Treat cattle lice in fall, not spring.....8

Briefs.....9

Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 1, 1990
For immediate release

Ministers release Crow Benefit method of payment proposal

Agriculture Minister Ernie Isley and Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley McClellan have released an Alberta Department of Agriculture proposal for a prairie-wide change in the method of payment of the Crow Benefit under the Western Grain Transportation Act (WGTA).

The new proposal, entitled "Freedom to Choose", calls for a federal government buy out of the Crow Benefit. Also proposed are revisions to the Western Grain Transportation Act rate structure and to regulations which now discourage efficiency in the grain handling and transportation system.

"What this proposal offers is a workable means of achieving Western Canada's key objectives for the improvement of grain handling and transportation policy, while returning freedom of choice to our farmers," says Isley. "We want to see control over resource allocation, transportation, production and marketing decisions returned to the hands of farmers, where it belongs.

"One of our most important considerations regarding the Crow Benefit is its future treatment given the likely outcome of the current GATT negotiations. We don't know yet what settlement will be reached under GATT, but it is becoming increasingly clear that transportation subsidies targeted at export commodities are going to come under tough scrutiny by the international trading community. The Freedom to Choose proposal would see the transportation subsidy removed from being a potential source of concern for Canada's trading partners. If we do nothing, if we try to stick with the status quo, we risk losing the Crow Benefit entirely."

A key feature of the new proposal is that it would allow farmers greater freedom to respond to conditions in the marketplace, and to promote change and improvement in the grain handling and transportation system.

(Cont'd)

McClellan notes, "Regardless of the future outcome of the GATT negotiations, we know that the status quo is not a feasible option for Western Canada's grain transportation system. Rising costs and inefficiencies in the system make it essential that we find a viable alternative to the current method of payment of the Crow Benefit. The new Alberta Agriculture proposal offers such an alternative."

The Freedom to Choose proposal identifies four objectives for Western Canada in the improvement of grain handling and transportation policy. These are: first, to remove the market distortion currently affecting domestic grain prices; second, to help ensure that government support measures are production-neutral, trade-neutral and foster environmental sustainability; third, to encourage the development of a more market-responsive, cost-effective grain handling and transportation system; and, fourth, to improve the ability of Canadian farmers to compete in the global marketplace.

"The Freedom to Choose proposal meets each of these objectives," says McClellan. "The potential benefits to Western Canadians of implementing the proposal on a prairie-wide basis are tremendous."

Among the potential benefits noted in the proposal are: the expansion and increased competitiveness of the livestock and other value-added sectors; the removal of distortions in grain prices; the promotion of environmental sustainability through increased forage production and reduced incentive to expand grain production onto marginal lands and wetlands; net savings in transportation costs of more than $100 million per year during the first 10 years of implementation, and increased savings in the years to follow; and, stabilization and enhancement of farm income throughout the Western Canadian agricultural sector.

The Freedom to Choose proposal was developed within the principles governing the federal/provincial Agri-Food Policy Review now underway, and is intended to build on the progress made to date on transportation issues through the review process.

(Cont'd)

Anyone wishing to obtain copies of the Freedom to Choose proposal is encouraged to contact Ken Beswick, chairman of Alberta Agriculture's Planning Secretariat, 3rd Floor, J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6, telephone (403)427-2417.

30

Contact:

Ken Beswick
427-2417

Gordon Herrington
427-2417

Brad Klak
Executive assistant
to the minister
427-2137

Louise Riopel
Executive assistant
to the associate minister
422-9156

October 1, 1990
For immediate release

Provincial soil conservation workshop in January

Making soil conservation pay is the theme of the second annual provincial soil conservation workshop scheduled for Edmonton January 15 through 17.

"The workshop is open to anyone who would like to attend," says its co-ordinator Peter Gamache, of Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch. "We hope to see a good turnout of producers, producer group representatives, agricultural fieldmen, agricultural service board members, extension staff, researchers and other interested parties."

Gamache says the workshop will emphasize productive and economically viable soil conservation cropping systems. Among the topics under discussion will be: soil moisture management, conservation economics, conservation equipment, soil conservation research and producer presentations on their soil conservation experiences. "Producers will play a leading role in many of the presentations," he says.

The workshop will also feature presentations and displays by agricultural service boards and producer groups. These displays will show their 1990 activities as well as be a forum to exchange ideas.

This year's conference has a new sponsor. "The participation of the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) is a valuable addition to the workshop," says Gamache. ACTS annual meeting will be the first evening of the workshop.

The other workshop co-sponsors are the Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI) and the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) program.

Registration forms will be available in November. For more information about the workshop, contact Gamache in Edmonton at 422-4385 or ACTS executive secretary Russ Evans in Langdon at 936-5306.

30

Contact: Peter Gamache
422-4385

October 1, 1990
For immediate release

Mowing and shredding to manage crop residue

Managing crop residue has become a soil and water conservation issue in the Nampa area of Alberta's Peace River region.

"Area farmers are looking for alternatives to burning," says John Zylstra, Alberta Agriculture regional soil conservation co-ordinator.

With assistance from the Canada/Alberta Soil Conservation Initiative (CASCI), Improvement District 17 West's agricultural service board (ASB) bought two 15 foot rotary mowers and demonstrated how they could be used to mow crop residue before seeding a crop into stubble.

"Approximately 4,000 acres of stubble in the area were mowed instead of being burned," says John Heinonen, of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) in Peace River. "The mowing operation also helped farmers reduce the number of necessary tillage operations before fields could be seeded with normal duty hoe drills or double disc drills."

The ASB rented the mower out for $70 per day. "Farmers were standing in line to use the mowers when they were first delivered to the municipal building," says John Heppleston, soil conservation technician for the municipality and the Nampa Tillage Group.

"Co-operating farmers were happy to leave the residue on the field and add to soil organic matter, rather than burning it and losing it to the air," says Zylstra.

Mowing and shredding was done most often where straight combining left tall stubble or where barley or clover couldn't be harvested last fall because of wet weather. Mowers did a reasonably good job at speeds up to 12 km/h.

The mowers' performance on clovers and other green manure crops this summer has also been evaluated. "When green manure crops are very growthy, they can plug up plows or require many discing operations. Mowing or shredding them can be a very cost effective way of preparing them for soil incorporation," says Heinonen.

30

Contact: John Zylstra
835-2291

John Heinonen
624-3388\3386

October 1, 1990
For immediate release

1990 Queen Mother scholarship recipients

Three Alberta students have been named the 1990 recipients of the "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother" Scholarship.

Christine Erichsen of Botha, Julie Dechant of Manning, and Patricia Kirylchuk of Lac La Biche will each receive $1500 awards in recognition of their academic achievement, leadership abilities and contribution to their communities.

CHRISTINE ERICHSEN

JULIE DECHANT

PATRICIA KIRYLCHUK

Erichsen, 18, is in her first year of a BSc in agriculture program at Camrose Luthern University College. She was raised on a mixed farm and has been an active 4-H member since 1982. In high school, Erichsen was a member of the School Reach Team (an academic challenge team), a curling club skip and held various positions on the student council. She is an active guest speaker and mistress of ceremonies at community functions, and in 1989 was a delegate at the Forum for Young Canadians in Ottawa.

Dechant, 18, is in her first year of agriculture at the University of Alberta. She is studying pre-veterinary medicine.

(Cont'd)

A former 4-H member, Dechant has also been active with the Hawk Hills Agricultural Society and has helped out at the Lakewood Equestrian Center through the last few summers. She has received numerous academic awards and was class representative on her high school students' union.

Kirylchuk, 21, is taking her first year of veterinary medicine (large animal) at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon.

She previously attended the University of Alberta, where she was a group leader with Intervarsity Christian Fellowship. Kirylchuk is a past 4-H member, current 4-H Alumni member and a six year member of the Lac La Biche Ukranian Dancers. She is active in her community both at home and at school.

The "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother" Scholarship was established in 1985, as a gift to the Queen Mother from the Alberta government. The Queen Mother attended the World Angus Forum in Edmonton in July of that year. The scholarship recognizes and assists deserving young Albertans in their first, second, third or fourth year of study in the fields of agriculture, agricultural engineering, home economics, or veterinary medicine (large animal).

This scholarship is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, administered by the 4-H branch and given out in the name of Her Majesty, the Queen Mother.

30

Contact: Val Runyon
422-4444

October 1, 1990
For immediate release

Treat cattle lice in fall, not spring

Warmer temperatures in the spring make lice on cattle more visible, but spring isn't the time of year to treat cattle for the pests says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"The types and methods of treatment are limited in the spring," says Ali Khan, a livestock entomologist. "These restrictions are because some chemicals aren't recommended before calving and for cows nursing calves. The best time for lice treatment is November and December."

Khan says farmers should be alert for two common types of lice that infest cattle in Alberta. There are sucking lice that feed on the animal's blood by piercing the skin. Chewing lice are scavengers that feed on solid materials such as hair, loose scales from the skin and clotted dried blood.

Sucking lice are about an eighth of an inch long, are slate-blue, and have a short head with a beak and powerful legs with claws. Chewing lice are about half that size at 1/16 inch long, have a reddish brown head, pale body, large head with chewing mouth parts and don't have claws.

"It's very important to identify the type of lice before applying a treatment. This can save a livestock producer money, labor and time by using the right treatment or integrating specific pest management techniques," he says.

Both types of lice can be controlled by a contact insecticide. Used during winter months, residues will stay on hair and skin for long term control. Systemic insecticides are an effective, although short term way to control blood sucking lice. Repeated treatments may be necessary to control a lice problem.

For more information, producers can contact their local Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist or Khan in Edmonton at 427-5083.

30

Contact: Ali Khan
427-5083

October 1, 1990
For immediate release

Agri-News briefs

VIDEO PACKAGE HELPS RURAL ORGANIZATIONS MARKET THEMSELVES

Marketing canola and calves is more familiar territory for rural Albertans than selling their organizations to and in their communities. "But, marketing is as vital to an organization as it is to any business, and the marketplace for members' time, energy and commitment is as competitive as the one where you sell your products," says Sabine Zenke, of the home economics branch. "So, effective promotion of your organization can make a dramatic contribution to its success." The "Spotlight on Marketing" video tape package can help rural organizations enhance themselves, keep existing members and attract new ones. Included in the "Spotlight on Marketing" package is the video tape, an instructor's guide and participant workbook. "The package is especially for presidents and staff or board members involved in public relations, but can be shown to the whole membership," she says. The presentation includes an overview of the marketing concept and the role of external and internal communications in an organization. If you or your organization are interested in the package, contact the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office or the write Alberta Agriculture Film Library in Edmonton at 7000-113 Street, T6H 5T6. As well, a factsheet, "Promoting your organization's activities" (Homedex 1926-50), is available through district offices and the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6.

FARM MACHINERY FIRES REPORT RELEASED

Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program has completed a report of farm machinery fires in the province for 1988 and 1989. Farm equipment fires caused nearly $2 million damage during those two years in 256 fires. "This report will guide and enhance fire prevention education and awareness programs we do in the future," says Solomon Kyeremanteng,

(Cont'd)

Agri-News briefs (cont'd)

FARM MACHINERY FIRES REPORT RELEASED (cont'd)

the program's manager. Over one-third of the fires occurred during the harvest months of September and October. Most fires began in the engine area and almost half were caused by mechanical or electrical failure. Only three injuries were reported for the tractor, combine and grain dryer fires. The average dollar loss per fire increased by 37 per cent between the two years, reaching just over $8,500 in 1989. For copies of the report, call or write the Alberta Agriculture Farm Safety Program at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or 427-2186.

GREENING OF THE '90S CONFERENCE

The greening of the 1990s and solutions to emerging environmental concerns is the title of a two-day conference of the Canadian Water Resources Association and the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists. The conference will be held at the Mayfield Inn in Edmonton October 23 and 24. The opening plenary session will look at what concerns the public most and why, positive actions in a global and local context and the multipurpose use philosophy of water management. Concurrent sessions through the two days will examine issues in water conservation, resource management, water quality, control processes and solid waste management. The conference finale is a panel presentation and discussion on the role of public, government and industry in finding solutions. For registration information, contact David Walker at 436-0618 (FAX 437-4031). For more information, contact Lynn Kemper at 422-4232.

30